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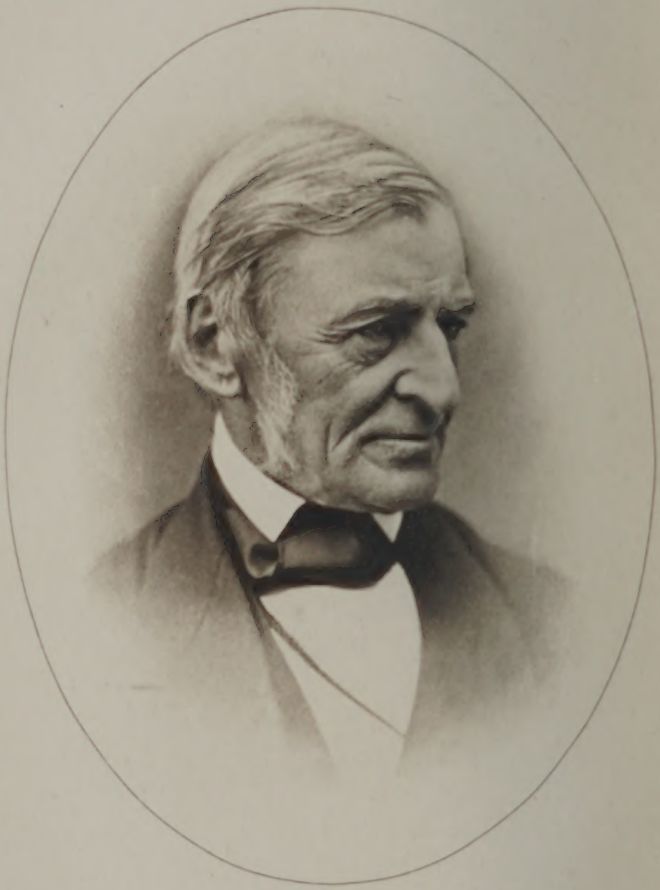
Concord Edition

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF RALPH WALDO EMERSON

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY EDWARD WALDO EMERSON AND A GENERAL INDEX

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAVURES

VOLUME X



1873



Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1873

LECTURES AND BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

BY

RALPH WALDO EMERSON



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

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NOTE

OF the pieces included in this volume the following, namely, those from the Dial, "Character," "Plutarch" and the biographical sketches of Dr. Ripley, of Mr. Hoar and of Henry Thoreau, were printed by Mr. Emerson before I took any part in the arrangement of his papers. The rest, except the sketches of Miss Mary Emerson and of Major Stearns, I got ready for his use in readings to his friends or to a limited public. He had given up the regular practice of lecturing, but would sometimes, upon special request, read a paper that had been prepared for him from his manuscripts, in the manner described in the Preface to Letters and Social Aims, — some former lecture serving as a nucleus for the new. Some of these papers he afterwards allowed to be printed; others, namely, "Aristocracy," "Education," "The Man of Letters," "The Scholar," "Historic Notes of Life and Letters in New England," "Mary Moody Emerson," "George L. Stearns," are now published for the first time.

J. E. CABOT.

1883.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	DEMONOLOGY	1
II.	ARISTOCRACY	29
III.	PERPETUAL FORCES	67
IV.	CHARACTER	89
V.	EDUCATION	123
VI.	THE SUPERLATIVE	161
VII.	THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ETHICS	181
VIII.	THE PREACHER	215
IX.	THE MAN OF LETTERS	239
X.	THE SCHOLAR	259
XI.	PLUTARCH	291
XII.	HISTORIC NOTES OF LIFE AND LETTERS IN NEW ENGLAND	323
XIII.	CHARDON STREET CONVENTION	371
XIV.	EZRA RIPLEY, D. D.	379
XV.	MARY MOODY EMERSON	397
XVI.	SAMUEL HOAR	435
XVII.	THOREAU	449
XVIII.	CARLYLE	487
XIX.	GEORGE L. STEARNS	499
	NOTES	509

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

RALPH WALDO EMERSON — Frontispiece
From a photograph by Foss in 1873

THE ORIGINAL EMERSON HOUSE IN IPSWICH, MASSACHUSETTS — 124
From the painting by Edward W. Emerson, in the possession of Mrs. Asa Gray, Cambridge

EZRA RIPLEY, D.D. — 180
From the painting in the Old Manse

GEORGE RIPLEY — 324
From the drawing in the office of the New York Tribune

SAMUEL HOAR — 436
From the photograph in the Public Library, Concord, Massachusetts

HENRY D. THOREAU — 450
From the bust by Walton Ricketson

In the chamber, on the stairs,
Lurking dumb,
Go and come
Lemurs and Lars.

DEMONOLOGY

THE name Demonology covers dreams, omens, coincidences, luck, sortilege, magic and other experiences which shun rather than court inquiry, and deserve notice chiefly because every man has usually in a lifetime two or three hints in this kind which are specially impressive to him. They also shed light on our structure.

The witchcraft of sleep divides with truth the empire of our lives. This soft enchantress visits two children lying locked in each other's arms, and carries them asunder by wide spaces of land and sea, and wide intervals of time: —

> "There lies a sleeping city, God of dreams!
> What an unreal and fantastic world
> Is going on below!
> Within the sweep of yon encircling wall
> How many a large creation of the night,
> Wide wilderness and mountain, rock and sea,
> Peopled with busy, transitory groups,
> Finds room to rise, and never feels the crowd."[1]

'T is superfluous to think of the dreams of multitudes, the astonishment remains that one should dream; that we should resign so quietly this deifying Reason, and become the theatre of

delirious shows, wherein time, space, persons, cities, animals, should dance before us in merry and mad confusion; a delicate creation outdoing the prime and flower of actual Nature, antic comedy alternating with horrid pictures. Sometimes the forgotten companions of childhood reappear: —

> "They come, in dim procession led,
> The cold, the faithless, and the dead,
> As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
> As if they parted yesterday:" [1]

or we seem busied for hours and days in peregrinations over seas and lands, in earnest dialogues, strenuous actions for nothings and absurdities, cheated by spectral jokes and waking suddenly with ghastly laughter, to be rebuked by the cold, lonely, silent midnight, and to rake with confusion in memory among the gibbering nonsense to find the motive of this contemptible cachinnation. Dreams are jealous of being remembered; they dissipate instantly and angrily if you try to hold them. When newly awaked from lively dreams, we are so near them, still agitated by them, still in their sphere, — give us one syllable, one feature, one hint, and we should repossess the whole; hours of this strange entertainment would come trooping back

to us ; but we cannot get our hand on the first link or fibre, and the whole is lost. There is a strange wilfulness in the speed with which it disperses and baffles our grasp.'

A dislocation seems to be the foremost trait of dreams. A painful imperfection almost always attends them. The fairest forms, the most noble and excellent persons, are deformed by some pitiful and insane circumstance. The very landscape and scenery in a dream seem not to fit us, but like a coat or cloak of some other person to overlap and encumber the wearer ; so is the ground, the road, the house, in dreams, too long or too short, and if it served no other purpose would show us how accurately Nature fits man awake.

There is one memory of waking and another of sleep. In our dreams the same scenes and fancies are many times associated, and that too, it would seem, for years. In sleep one shall travel certain roads in stage-coaches or gigs, which he recognizes as familiar, and has dreamed that ride a dozen times ; or shall walk alone in familiar fields and meadows, which road or which meadow in waking hours he never looked upon. This feature of dreams deserves the more attention from its singular resemblance to that obscure yet

startling experience which almost every person confesses in daylight, that particular passages of conversation and action have occurred to him in the same order before, whether dreaming or waking; a suspicion that they have been with precisely these persons in precisely this room, and heard precisely this dialogue, at some former hour, they know not when.

Animals have been called "the dreams of Nature." Perhaps for a conception of their consciousness we may go to our own dreams. In a dream we have the instinctive obedience, the same torpidity of the highest power, the same unsurprised assent to the monstrous as these metamorphosed men exhibit. Our thoughts in a stable or in a menagerie, on the other hand, may well remind us of our dreams. What compassion do these imprisoning forms awaken! You may catch the glance of a dog sometimes which lays a kind of claim to sympathy and brotherhood. What! somewhat of me down there? Does he know it? Can he too, as I, go out of himself, see himself, perceive relations? We fear lest the poor brute should gain one dreadful glimpse of his condition, should learn in some moment the tough limitations of this fettering organization.[1] It was in this glance that Ovid got the hint of

his metamorphoses; Calidasa of his transmigration of souls. For these fables are our own thoughts carried out.' What keeps those wild tales in circulation for thousands of years? What but the wild fact to which they suggest some approximation of theory? Nor is the fact quite solitary, for in varieties of our own species where organization seems to predominate over the genius of man, in Kalmuck or Malay or Flathead Indian, we are sometimes pained by the same feeling; and sometimes too the sharpwitted prosperous white man awakens it. In a mixed assembly we have chanced to see not only a glance of Abdiel, so grand and keen, but also in other faces the features of the mink, of the bull, of the rat and the barn-door fowl. You think, could the man overlook his own condition, he could not be restrained from suicide.

Dreams have a poetic integrity and truth. This limbo and dust-hole of thought is presided over by a certain reason, too. Their extravagance from nature is yet within a higher nature. They seem to us to suggest an abundance and fluency of thought not familiar to the waking experience. They pique us by independence of us, yet we know ourselves in this mad crowd, and owe to dreams a kind of divination and wisdom. My

dreams are not me; they are not Nature, or the Not-me: they are both. They have a double consciousness, at once sub- and ob-jective. We call the phantoms that rise, the creation of our fancy, but they act like mutineers, and fire on their commander; showing that every act, every thought, every cause, is bipolar, and in the act is contained the counteraction. If I strike, I am struck; if I chase, I am pursued.'

Wise and sometimes terrible hints shall in them be thrown to the man out of a quite unknown intelligence. He shall be startled two or three times in his life by the justice as well as the significance of this phantasmagoria. Once or twice the conscious fetters shall seem to be unlocked, and a freer utterance attained. A prophetic character in all ages has haunted them. They are the maturation often of opinions not consciously carried out to statements, but whereof we already possessed the elements. Thus, when awake, I know the character of Rupert, but do not think what he may do. In dreams I see him engaged in certain actions which seem preposterous, — out of all fitness. He is hostile, he is cruel, he is frightful, he is a poltroon. It turns out prophecy a year later. But it was already in my mind as character, and the sibyl dreams merely embodied

it in fact. Why then should not symptoms, auguries, forebodings be, and, as one said, the moanings of the spirit?

We are let by this experience into the high region of Cause, and acquainted with the identity of very unlike-seeming effects. We learn that actions whose turpitude is very differently reputed proceed from one and the same affection. Sleep takes off the costume of circumstance, arms us with terrible freedom, so that every will rushes to a deed. A skilful man reads his dreams for his self-knowledge; yet not the details, but the quality. What part does he play in them, — a cheerful, manly part, or a poor drivelling part? However monstrous and grotesque their apparitions, they have a substantial truth. The same remark may be extended to the omens and coincidences which may have astonished us. Of all it is true that the reason of them is always latent in the individual. Goethe said: "These whimsical pictures, inasmuch as they originate from us, may well have an analogy with our whole life and fate."

The soul contains in itself the event that shall presently befall it, for the event is only the actualizing of its thoughts. It is no wonder that particular dreams and presentiments should fall

out and be prophetic. The fallacy consists in selecting a few insignificant hints when all are inspired with the same sense. As if one should exhaust his astonishment at the economy of his thumb-nail, and overlook the central causal miracle of his being a man. Every man goes through the world attended with innumerable facts prefiguring (yes, distinctly announcing) his fate, if only eyes of sufficient heed and illumination were fastened on the sign.[1] The sign is always there, if only the eye were also; just as under every tree in the speckled sunshine and shade no man notices that every spot of light is a perfect image of the sun, until in some hour the moon eclipses the luminary; and then first we notice that the spots of light have become crescents, or annular, and correspond to the changed figure of the sun. Things are significant enough, Heaven knows; but the seer of the sign,—where is he? We doubt not a man's fortune may be read in the lines of his hand, by palmistry; in the lines of his face, by physiognomy; in the outlines of the skull, by craniology: the lines are all there, but the reader waits.[2] The long waves indicate to the instructed mariner that there is no near land in the direction from which they come. Belzoni describes the three

marks which led him to dig for a door to the pyramid of Ghizeh. What thousands had beheld the same spot for so many ages, and seen no three marks.

Secret analogies tie together the remotest parts of Nature, as the atmosphere of a summer morning is filled with innumerable gossamer threads running in every direction, revealed by the beams of the rising sun! 'All life, all creation, is tell-tale and betraying. A man reveals himself in every glance and step and movement and rest: —

> "Head with foot hath private amity,
> And both with moons and tides." [2]

Not a mathematical axiom but is a moral rule. The jest and byword to an intelligent ear extends its meaning to the soul and to all time. Indeed, all productions of man are so anthropomorphous that not possibly can he invent any fable that shall not have a deep moral and be true in senses and to an extent never intended by the inventor. Thus all the bravest tales of Homer and the poets, modern philosophers can explain with profound judgment of law and state and ethics. Lucian has an idle tale that Pancrates, journeying from Memphis to Coppus, and wanting a servant, took a door-bar and pronounced over it magical words, and it stood up and brought

him water, and turned a spit, and carried bundles, doing all the work of a slave. What is this but a prophecy of the progress of art? For Pancrates write Watt or Fulton, and for "magical words" write "steam;" and do they not make an iron bar and half a dozen wheels do the work, not of one, but of a thousand skilful mechanics?

"Nature," said Swedenborg, "makes almost as much demand on our faith as miracles do." And I find nothing in fables more astonishing than my experience in every hour. One moment of a man's life is a fact so stupendous as to take the lustre out of all fiction.' The lovers of marvels, of what we call the occult and unproved sciences, of mesmerism, of astrology, of coincidences, of intercourse, by writing or by rapping or by painting, with departed spirits, need not reproach us with incredulity because we are slow to accept their statement. It is not the incredibility of the fact, but a certain want of harmony between the action and the agents. We are used to vaster wonders than these that are alleged. In the hands of poets, of devout and simple minds, nothing in the line of their character and genius would surprise us. But we should look for the style of the great artist in it, look for completeness and harmony. Nature never works

like a conjuror, to surprise, rarely by shocks, but by infinite graduation;[1] so that we live embosomed in sounds we do not hear, scents we do not smell, spectacles we see not, and by innumerable impressions so softly laid on that though important we do not discover them until our attention is called to them.

For Spiritism, it shows that no man, almost, is fit to give evidence. Then I say to the amiable and sincere among them, these matters are quite too important than that I can rest them on any legends. If I have no facts, as you allege, I can very well wait for them. I am content and occupied with such miracles as I know, such as my eyes and ears daily show me, such as humanity and astronomy. If any others are important to me they will certainly be shown to me.[2]

In times most credulous of these fancies the sense was always met and the superstition rebuked by the grave spirit of reason and humanity. When Hector is told that the omens are unpropitious, he replies, —

"One omen is the best, to fight for one's country." [3]

Euripides said, "He is not the best prophet who guesses well, and he is not the wisest man

whose guess turns out well in the event, but he who, whatever the event be, takes reason and probability for his guide." "Swans, horses, dogs and dragons," says Plutarch, "we distinguish as sacred, and vehicles of the divine foresight, and yet we cannot believe that men are sacred and favorites of Heaven." The poor ship-master discovered a sound theology, when in the storm at sea he made his prayer to Neptune, "O God, thou mayst save me if thou wilt, and if thou wilt thou mayst destroy me; but, however, I will hold my rudder true." ' Let me add one more example of the same good sense, in a story quoted out of Hecateus of Abdera: —

"As I was once travelling by the Red Sea, there was one among the horsemen that attended us named Masollam, a brave and strong man, and according to the testimony of all the Greeks and barbarians, a very skilful archer. Now while the whole multitude was on the way, an augur called out to them to stand still, and this man inquired the reason of their halting. The augur showed him a bird, and told him, 'If that bird remained where he was, it would be better for them all to remain; if he flew on, they might proceed; but if he flew back, they must return.' The Jew said nothing, but bent his bow and shot the bird to the ground. This act offended the augur and some others, and they

began to utter imprecations against the Jew. But he replied, 'Wherefore? Why are you so foolish as to take care of this unfortunate bird? How could this fowl give us any wise directions respecting our journey, when he could not save his own life? Had he known anything of futurity, he would not have come here to be killed by the arrow of Masollam the Jew.'"[1]

It is not the tendency of our times to ascribe importance to whimsical pictures of sleep, or to omens. But the faith in peculiar and alien power takes another form in the modern mind, much more resembling the ancient doctrine of the guardian genius. The belief that particular individuals are attended by a good fortune which makes them desirable associates in any enterprise of uncertain success, exists not only among those who take part in political and military projects, but influences all joint action of commerce and affairs, and a corresponding assurance in the individuals so distinguished meets and justifies the expectation of others by a boundless self-trust. "I have a lucky hand, sir," said Napoleon to his hesitating Chancellor; "those on whom I lay it are fit for anything." This faith is familiar in one form, — that often a certain abdication of prudence and foresight is an element of success; that children and young persons come off safe

itself in the corporeal and incorporeal, yes, in beasts too in a remarkable manner, yet it stands specially in wonderful relations with men, and forms in the moral world, though not an antagonist, yet a transverse element, so that the former may be called the warp, the latter the woof. For the phenomena which hence originate there are countless names, since all philosophies and religions have attempted in prose or in poetry to solve this riddle, and to settle the thing once for all, as indeed they may be allowed to do.

"But this demonic element appears most fruitful when it shows itself as the determining characteristic in an individual. In the course of my life I have been able to observe several such, some near, some farther off. They are not always superior persons, either in mind or in talent. They seldom recommend themselves through goodness of heart. But a monstrous force goes out from them, and they exert an incredible power over all creatures, and even over the elements; who shall say how far such an influence may extend? All united moral powers avail nothing against them. In vain do the clear-headed part of mankind discredit them as deceivers or deceived, — the mass is attracted. Seldom or never do they meet their match among their contemporaries; they are not to be conquered save by the universe itself, against which they have taken up arms. Out of such experiences doubtless arose the strange, monstrous proverb, 'Nobody against God but God.'" [1]

It would be easy in the political history of

every time to furnish examples of this irregular success, men having a force which without virtue, without shining talent, yet makes them prevailing. No equal appears in the field against them.' A power goes out from them which draws all men and events to favor them. The crimes they commit, the exposures which follow, and which would ruin any other man, are strangely overlooked, or do more strangely turn to their account.

I set down these things as I find them, but however poetic these twilights of thought, I like daylight, and I find somewhat wilful, some play at blindman's-buff, when men as wise as Goethe talk mysteriously of the demonological. The insinuation is that the known eternal laws of morals and matter are sometimes corrupted or evaded by this gypsy principle, which chooses favorites and works in the dark for their behoof; as if the laws of the Father of the universe were sometimes balked and eluded by a meddlesome Aunt of the universe for her pets. You will observe that this extends the popular idea of success to the very gods; that they foster a success to you which is not a success to all; that fortunate men, fortunate youths exist, whose good is not virtue or the public good, but a private good,

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robbed from the rest. It is a midsummer madness, corrupting all who hold the tenet. The demonologic is only a fine name for egotism; an exaggeration namely of the individual, whom it is Nature's settled purpose to postpone.[1] "There is one world common to all who are awake, but each sleeper betakes himself to one of his own."[2] Dreams retain the infirmities of our character. The good genius may be there or not, our evil genius is sure to stay. The Ego partial makes the dream; the Ego total the interpretation. Life is also a dream on the same terms.

The history of man is a series of conspiracies to win from Nature some advantage without paying for it. It is curious to see what grand powers we have a hint of and are mad to grasp, yet how slow Heaven is to trust us with such edge-tools. "All that frees talent without increasing self-command is noxious." Thus the fabled ring of Gyges, making the wearer invisible, which is represented in modern fable by the telescope as used by Schlemil, is simply mischievous.[3] A new or private language, used to serve only low or political purposes; the transfusion of the blood; the steam battery, so fatal as to put an end to war by the threat of universal murder;

the desired discovery of the guided balloon, are of this kind. Tramps are troublesome enough in the city and in the highways, but tramps flying through the air and descending on the lonely traveller or the lonely farmer's house or the bank-messenger in the country, can well be spared. Men are not fit to be trusted with these talismans.

Before we acquire great power we must acquire wisdom to use it well. Animal magnetism inspires the prudent and moral with a certain terror; so the divination of contingent events, and the alleged second-sight of the pseudo-spiritualists. There are many things of which a wise man might wish to be ignorant, and these are such. Shun them as you would the secrets of the undertaker and the butcher. The best are never demoniacal or magnetic; leave this limbo to the Prince of the power of the air. The lowest angel is better. It is the height of the animal; below the region of the divine. Power as such is not known to the angels.

Great men feel that they are so by sacrificing their selfishness and falling back on what is humane; in renouncing family, clan, country and each exclusive and local connection, to beat with the pulse and breathe with the lungs of nations.

A Highland chief, an Indian sachem or a feudal baron may fancy that the mountains and lakes were made specially for him Donald, or him Tecumseh; that the one question for history is the pedigree of his house, and future ages will be busy with his renown; that he has a guardian angel; that he is not in the roll of common men, but obeys a high family destiny; when he acts, unheard-of success evinces the presence of rare agents; what is to befall him, omens and coincidences foreshow; when he dies, banshees will announce his fate to kinsmen in foreign parts.' What more facile than to project this exuberant selfhood into the region where individuality is forever bounded by generic and cosmical laws? The deepest flattery, and that to which we can never be insensible, is the flattery of omens.

We may make great eyes if we like, and say of one on whom the sun shines, "What luck presides over him!" But we know that the law of the Universe is one for each and for all. There is as precise and as describable a reason for every fact occurring to him, as for any occurring to any man. Every fact in which the moral elements intermingle is not the less under the dominion of fatal law. Lord Bacon uncovers the

magic when he says, "Manifest virtues procure reputation; occult ones, fortune." Thus the so-called fortunate man is one who, though not gifted to speak when the people listen, or to act with grace or with understanding to great ends, yet is one who, in actions of a low or common pitch, relies on his instincts, and simply does not act where he should not, but waits his time, and without effort acts when the need is. If to this you add a fitness to the society around him, you have the elements of fortune; so that in a particular circle and knot of affairs he is not so much his own man as the hand of Nature and time. Just as his eye and hand work exactly together,—and to hit the mark with a stone he has only to fasten his eye firmly on the mark and his arm will swing true,—so the main ambition and genius being bestowed in one direction, the lesser spirit and involuntary aids within his sphere will follow. The fault of most men is that they are busybodies; do not wait the simple movement of the soul, but interfere and thwart the instructions of their own minds.[1]

Coincidences, dreams, animal magnetism, omens, sacred lots, have great interest for some minds. They run into this twilight and say, "There 's more than is dreamed of in your phi-

losophy." Certainly these facts are interesting, and deserve to be considered. But they are entitled only to a share of attention, and not a large share. *Nil magnificum, nil generosum sapit.* Let their value as exclusive subjects of attention be judged of by the infallible test of the state of mind in which much notice of them leaves us. Read a page of Cudworth or of Bacon, and we are exhilarated and armed to manly duties. Read demonology or Colquhoun's Report, and we are bewildered and perhaps a little besmirched.[1] We grope. They who love them say they are to reveal to us a world of unknown, unsuspected truths. But suppose a diligent collection and study of these occult facts were made, they are merely physiological, semi-medical, related to the machinery of man, opening to our curiosity how we live, and no aid on the superior problems why we live, and what we do. While the dilettanti have been prying into the humors and muscles of the eye, simple men will have helped themselves and the world by using their eyes.[2]

And this is not the least remarkable fact which the adepts have developed. Men who had never wondered at anything, who had thought it the most natural thing in the world that they should

exist in this orderly and replenished world, have been unable to suppress their amazement at the disclosures of the somnambulist. The peculiarity of the history of Animal Magnetism is that it drew in as inquirers and students a class of persons never on any other occasion known as students and inquirers. Of course the inquiry is pursued on low principles. Animal Magnetism peeps. It becomes in such hands a black art. The uses of the thing, the commodity, the power, at once come to mind and direct the course of inquiry. It seemed to open again that door which was open to the imagination of childhood — of magicians and fairies and lamps of Aladdin, the travelling cloak, the shoes of swiftness and the sword of sharpness that were to satisfy the uttermost wish of the senses without danger or a drop of sweat. But as Nature can never be outwitted, as in the Universe no man was ever known to get a cent's worth without paying in some form or other the cent, so this prodigious promiser ends always and always will, as sorcery and alchemy have done before, in very small and smoky performance.'

Mesmerism is high life below stairs; Momus playing Jove in the kitchens of Olympus. 'T is a low curiosity or lust of structure, and is sepa-

rated by celestial diameters from the love of spiritual truths. It is wholly a false view to couple these things in any manner with the religious nature and sentiment, and a most dangerous superstition to raise them to the lofty place of motives and sanctions. This is to prefer halos and rainbows to the sun and moon. These adepts have mistaken flatulency for inspiration. Were this drivel which they report as the voice of spirits really such, we must find out a more decisive suicide. I say to the table-rappers: —

> "I well believe
> Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know,
> And so far will I trust thee, gentle Kate."[1]

They are ignorant of all that is healthy and useful to know, and by laws of kind, — dunces seeking dunces in the dark of what they call the spiritual world, — preferring snores and gastric noises to the voice of any muse. I think the rappings a new test, like blue litmus or other chemical absorbent, to try catechisms with. It detects organic skepticism in the very heads of the Church. 'T is a lawless world. We have left the geometry, the compensation, and the conscience of the daily world, and come into the realm or chaos of chance and pretty or ugly

confusion; no guilt and no virtue, but a droll bedlam, where everybody believes only after his humor, and the actors and spectators have no conscience or reflection, no police, no foot-rule, no sanity, — nothing but whim and whim creative.'

Meantime far be from me the impatience which cannot brook the supernatural, the vast; far be from me the lust of explaining away all which appeals to the imagination, and the great presentiments which haunt us. Willingly I too say, Hail! to the unknown awful powers which transcend the ken of the understanding. And the attraction which this topic has had for me and which induces me to unfold its parts before you is precisely because I think the numberless forms in which this superstition has reappeared in every time and every people indicates the inextinguishableness of wonder in man; betrays his conviction that behind all your explanations is a vast and potent and living Nature, inexhaustible and sublime, which you cannot explain. He is sure no book, no man has told him all. He is sure the great Instinct, the circumambient soul which flows into him as into all, and is his life, has not been searched. He is sure that intimate relations subsist between his character and

his fortunes, between him and his world; and until he can adequately tell them he will tell them wildly and fabulously. Demonology is the shadow of Theology.[1]

The whole world is an omen and a sign. Why look so wistfully in a corner? Man is the Image of God. Why run after a ghost or a dream? The voice of divination resounds everywhere and runs to waste unheard, unregarded, as the mountains echo with the bleatings of cattle.[2]

II

ARISTOCRACY

"But for ye speken of such gentillesse
As is descended out of old richesse,
That therfore shullen ye be gentilmen, —
Such arrogance n' is not worth a hen.
Look who that is most virtuous alway,
Prive and apert, and most entendeth aye
To do the gentil dedés that he can,
And take him for the greatest gentilman.

"Take fire and beare it into the derkest hous
Betwixt this and the mount of Caucasus
And let men shut the dorés, and go thenne,
Yet wol the fire as faire lie and brenne
As twenty thousand men might it behold;
His office natural ay wol it hold,
Up peril of my lif, til that it die.

"Here may ye see wel, how that genterie
Is not annexed to possession,
Sith folk ne don their operation
Alway, as doth the fire, lo, in his kind,
For God it wot, men may full often find
A lorde's son do shame and vilanie.
And he that wol have prize of his genterie,
For he was boren of a gentil house,
And had his elders noble and virtuous,

And n' ill hinselven do no gentil dedes,
Ne folwe his gentil auncestrie, that dead is,
He n' is not gentil, be he duke or erl;
For vilaines' sinful dedés make a churl.
Than cometh our very gentillesse of grace,
It was no thing bequethed us with our place."

CHAUCER, "The Knighte's Tale."

ARISTOCRACY

THERE is an attractive topic, which never goes out of vogue and is impertinent in no community, — the permanent traits of the Aristocracy. It is an interest of the human race, and, as I look at it, inevitable, sacred and to be found in every country and in every company of men. My concern with it is that concern which all well-disposed persons will feel, that there should be model men, — true instead of spurious pictures of excellence, and, if possible, living standards.

I observe that the word *gentleman* is gladly heard in all companies; that the cogent motive with the best young men who are revolving plans and forming resolutions for the future, is the spirit of honor, the wish to be gentlemen. They do not yet covet political power, nor any exuberance of wealth, wealth that costs too much; nor do they wish to be saints; for fear of partialism; but the middle term, the reconciling element, the success of the manly character, they find in the idea of gentleman. It is not to be a man of rank, but a man of honor, accomplished in all arts and generosities, which seems to them

the right mark and the true chief of our modern society. A reference to society is part of the idea of culture; science of a gentleman; art of a gentleman; poetry in a gentleman: intellectually held, that is, for their own sake, for what they are; for their universal beauty and worth; — not for economy, which degrades them, but not over-intellectually, that is, not to ecstasy, entrancing the man, but redounding to his beauty and glory.

In the sketches which I have to offer I shall not be surprised if my readers should fancy that I am giving them, under a gayer title, a chapter on Education. It will not pain me if I am found now and then to rove from the accepted and historic, to a theoretic peerage; or if it should turn out, what is true, that I am describing a real aristocracy, a chapter of Templars who sit indifferently in all climates and under the shadow of all institutions, but so few, so heedless of badges, so rarely convened, so little in sympathy with the predominant politics of nations, that their names and doings are not recorded in any Book of Peerage, or any Court Journal, or even Daily Newspaper of the world.

I find the caste in the man. The Golden Book of Venice, the scale of European chivalry, the

Barons of England, the hierarchy of India with its impassable degrees, is each a transcript of the decigrade or centigraded Man. A many-chambered Aristocracy lies already organized in his moods and faculties. Room is found for all the departments of the state in the moods and faculties of each human spirit, with separate function and difference of dignity.

The terrible aristocracy that is in Nature. Real people dwelling with the real, face to face, undaunted: then, far down, people of taste, people dwelling in a relation, or rumor, or influence of good and fair, entertained by it, superficially touched, yet charmed by these shadows: — and, far below these, gross and thoughtless, the animal man, billows of chaos, down to the dancing and menial organizations.

I observe the inextinguishable prejudice men have in favor of a hereditary transmission of qualities. It is in vain to remind them that Nature appears capricious. Some qualities she carefully fixes and transmits, but some, and those the finer, she exhales with the breath of the individual, as too costly to perpetuate. But I notice also that they may become fixed and permanent in any stock, by painting and repainting them on every individual, until at last Nature

adopts them and bakes them into her porcelain.

At all events I take this inextinguishable persuasion in men's minds as a hint from the outward universe to man to inlay as many virtues and superiorities as he can into this swift fresco of the day, which is hardening to an immortal picture.[1]

If one thinks of the interest which all men have in beauty of character and manners; that it is of the last importance to the imagination and affection, inspiring as it does that loyalty and worship so essential to the finish of character, — certainly, if culture, if laws, if primogeniture, if heraldry, if money could secure such a result as superior and finished men, it would be the interest of all mankind to see that the steps were taken, the pains incurred. No taxation, no concession, no conferring of privileges never so exalted would be a price too large.

The old French Revolution attracted to its first movement all the liberality, virtue, hope and poetry in Europe. By the abolition of kingship and aristocracy, tyranny, inequality and poverty would end. Alas! no; tyranny, inequality, poverty, stood as fast and fierce as ever. We likewise put faith in Democracy; in the Republican

principle carried out to the extremes of practice in universal suffrage, in the will of majorities. The young adventurer finds that the relations of society, the position of classes, irk and sting him, and he lends himself to each malignant party that assails what is eminent. He will one day know that this is not removable, but a distinction in the nature of things; that neither the caucus, nor the newspaper, nor the Congress, nor the mob, nor the guillotine, nor fire, nor all together, can avail to outlaw, cut out, burn or destroy the offence of superiority in persons. The manners, the pretension, which annoy me so much, are not superficial, but built on a real distinction in the nature of my companion. The superiority in him is inferiority in me, and if this particular companion were wiped by a sponge out of Nature, my inferiority would still be made evident to me by other persons everywhere and every day.

No, not the hardest utilitarian will question the value of an aristocracy if he love himself. For every man confesses that the highest good which the universe proposes to him is the highest society. If a few grand natures should come to us and weave duties and offices between us and them, it would make our bread ambrosial.

I affirm that inequalities exist, not in costume, but in the powers of expression and action; a primitive aristocracy; and that we, certainly, have not come here to describe well-dressed vulgarity. I cannot tell how English titles are bestowed, whether on pure blood, or on the largest holder in the three-per-cents. The English government and people, or the French government, may easily make mistakes; but Nature makes none. Every mark and scutcheon of hers indicates constitutional qualities. In science, in trade, in social discourse, as in the state, it is the same thing. Forever and ever it takes a pound to lift a pound.'

It is plain that all the deference of modern society to this idea of the Gentleman, and all the whimsical tyranny of Fashion which has continued to engraft itself on this reverence, is a secret homage to reality and love which ought to reside in every man. This is the steel that is hid under gauze and lace, under flowers and spangles. And it is plain that instead of this idolatry, a worship; instead of this impure, a pure reverence for character, a new respect for the sacredness of the individual man, is that antidote which must correct in our country the disgraceful deference to public opinion, and the

insane subordination of the end to the means. From the folly of too much association we must come back to the repose of self-reverence and trust.

The game of the world is a perpetual trial of strength between man and events. The common man is the victim of events. Whatever happens is too much for him, he is drawn this way and that way, and his whole life is a hurry. The superior man is at home in his own mind. We like cool people, who neither hope nor fear too much, but seem to have many strings to their bow, and can survive the blow well enough if stock should rise or fall, if parties should be broken up, if their money or their family should be dispersed; who can stand a slander very well; indeed on whom events make little or no impression, and who can face death with firmness. In short, we dislike every mark of a superficial life and action, and prize whatever mark of a central life.[1]

What is the meaning of this invincible respect for war, here in the triumphs of our commercial civilization, that we can never quite smother the trumpet and the drum? How is it that the sword runs away with all the fame from the spade and the wheel? How sturdy seem to us

in the history, those Merovingians, Guelphs, Dorias, Sforzas, Burgundies and Guesclins of the old warlike ages! We can hardly believe they were all such speedy shadows as we; that an ague or fever, a drop of water or a crystal of ice ended them. We give soldiers the same advantage to-day. From the most accumulated culture we are always running back to the sound of any drum and fife. And in any trade, or in law-courts, in orchard and farm, and even in saloons, they only prosper or they prosper best who have a military mind, who engineer in sword and cannon style, with energy and sharpness. Why, but because courage never loses its high price? Why, but because we wish to see those to whom existence is most adorned and attractive, foremost to peril it for their object, and ready to answer for their actions with their life.[1]

The existence of an upper class is not injurious, as long as it is dependent on merit. For so long it is provocation to the bold and generous. These distinctions exist, and they are deep, not to be talked or voted away. If the differences are organic, so are the merits, that is to say the power and excellence we describe are real. Aristocracy is the class eminent by personal qualities, and to them belongs without assertion a

proper influence. Men of aim must lead the aimless; men of invention the uninventive. I wish catholic men, who by their science and skill are at home in every latitude and longitude, who carry the world in their thoughts; men of universal politics, who are interested in things in proportion to their truth and magnitude; who know the beauty of animals and the laws of their nature, whom the mystery of botany allures, and the mineral laws; who see general effects and are not too learned to love the Imagination, the power and the spirits of Solitude; — men who see the dance in men's lives as well as in a ball-room, and can feel and convey the sense which is only collectively or totally expressed by a population; ' men who are charmed by the beautiful Nemesis as well as by the dire Nemesis, and dare trust their inspiration for their welcome; who would find their fellows in persons of real elevation of whatever kind of speculative or practical ability. We are fallen on times so acquiescent and traditionary that we are in danger of forgetting so simple a fact as that the basis of all aristocracy must be truth, — the doing what elsewhere is pretended to be done. One would gladly see all our institutions rightly aristocratic in this wise.

I enumerate the claims by which men enter the superior class.

1. A commanding talent. In every company one finds the best man; and if there be any question, it is decided the instant they enter into any practical enterprise. If the finders of glass, gunpowder, printing, electricity, — if the healer of small-pox, the contriver of the safety-lamp, of the aqueduct, of the bridge, of the tunnel; if the finders of parallax, of new planets, of steam power for boat and carriage, the finder of sulphuric ether and the electric telegraph, — if these men should keep their secrets, or only communicate them to each other, must not the whole race of mankind serve them as gods? It only needs to look at the social aspect of England and America and France, to see the rank which original practical talent commands.

Every survey of the dignified classes, in ancient or modern history, imprints universal lessons, and establishes a nobility of a prouder creation. And the conclusion which Roman Senators, Indian Brahmins, Persian Magians, European Nobles and great Americans inculcate, — that which they preach out of their material wealth and glitter, out of their old war and modern land-owning, even out of sensuality and

sneers, is, that the radical and essential distinctions of every aristocracy are moral. Do not hearken to the men, but to the Destiny in the institutions. An aristocracy is composed of simple and sincere men for whom Nature and ethics are strong enough, who say what they mean and go straight to their objects. It is essentially real.'

The multiplication of monarchs known by telegraph and daily news from all countries to the daily papers, and the effect of freer institutions in England and America, has robbed the title of king of all its romance, as that of our commercial consuls as compared with the ancient Roman. We shall come to add "Kings" in the "Contents" of the Directory, as we do "Physicians," "Brokers," etc. In simple communities, in the heroic ages, a man was chosen for his knack; got his name, rank and living for that; and the best of the best was the aristocrat or king. In the Norse Edda it appears as the curious but excellent policy of contending tribes, when tired of war, to exchange hostages, and in reality each to adopt from the other a first-rate man, who thus acquired a new country; was at once made a chief. And no wrong was so keenly resented as any fraud in this transaction. In the heroic ages, as we call them,

the hero uniformly has some real talent. Ulysses in Homer is represented as a very skilful carpenter. He builds the boat with which he leaves Calypso's isle, and in his own palace carves a bedstead out of the trunk of a tree and inlays it with gold and ivory. Epeus builds the wooden horse. The English nation down to a late age inherited the reality of the Northern stock. In 1373, in writs of summons of members of Parliament, the sheriff of every county is to cause "two dubbed knights, or the most worthy esquires, the most expert in feats of arms, and no others; and of every city, two citizens, and of every borough, two burgesses, such as have greatest skill in shipping and merchandising, to be returned."

The ancients were fond of ascribing to their nobles gigantic proportions and strength. The hero must have the force of ten men. The chief is taller by a head than any of his tribe. Douglas can throw the bar a greater cast. Richard can sever the iron bolt with his sword. The horn of Roland, in the romance, is heard sixty miles. The Cid has a prevailing health that will let him nurse the leper, and share his bed without harm.' And since the body is the pipe through which we tap all the succors and virtues of the material

world, it is certain that a sound body must be at the root of any excellence in manners and actions; a strong and supple frame which yields a stock of strength and spirits for all the needs of the day, and generates the habit of relying on a supply of power for all extraordinary exertions. When Nature goes to create a national man, she puts a symmetry between the physical and intellectual powers. She moulds a large brain, and joins to it a great trunk to supply it; as if a fine alembic were fed with liquor for its distillations from broad full vats in the vaults of the laboratory.

Certainly, the origin of most of the perversities and absurdities that disgust us is, primarily, the want of health. Genius is health and Beauty is health and Virtue is health. The petty arts which we blame in the half-great seem as odious to them also; — the resources of weakness and despair. And the manners betray the like puny constitution. Temperament is fortune, and we must say it so often. In a thousand cups of life, only one is the right mixture, — a fine adjustment to the existing elements.' When that befalls, when the well-mixed man is born, with eyes not too dull nor too good, with fire enough and earth enough, capable of impressions from all things, and not too susceptible, — then no gift need be bestowed

on him, he brings with him fortune, followers, love, power.

> "I think he 'll be to Rome
> As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it
> By sovereignty of nature." [1]

Not the phrenologist but the philosopher may well say, Let me see his brain, and I will tell you if he shall be poet, king, founder of cities, rich, magnetic, of a secure hand, of a scientific memory, a right classifier; or whether he shall be a bungler, driveller, unlucky, heavy and tedious.

It were to dispute against the sun, to deny this difference of brain.[2] I see well enough that when I bring one man into an estate, he sees vague capabilities, what others might, could, would or should do with it. If I bring another, he sees what *he* should do with it. He appreciates the water-privilege, land fit for orchard, tillage, pasturage, wood-lot, cranberry-meadow; but just as easily he foresees all the means, all the steps of the process, and could lay his hand as readily on one as on another point in that series which opens the capability to the last point. The poet sees wishfully enough the result; the well-built head supplies all the steps, one as perfect as the other, in the series. Seeing this working head in him, it becomes to me as certain that he will

have the direction of estates, as that there are estates. If we see tools in a magazine, as a file, an anchor, a plough, a pump, a paint-brush, a cider-press, a diving-bell, we can predict well enough their destination; and the man's associations, fortunes, love, hatred, residence, rank, the books he will buy, the roads he will traverse are predetermined in his organism. Men will need him, and he is rich and eminent by nature. That man cannot be too late or too early.[1] Let him not hurry or hesitate. Though millions are already arrived, his seat is reserved. Though millions attend, they only multiply his friends and agents. It never troubles the Senator what multitudes crack the benches and bend the galleries to hear. He who understands the art of war, reckons the hostile battalions and cities, opportunities and spoils.

An aristocracy could not exist unless it were organic. Men are born to command, and — it is even so — "come into the world booted and spurred to ride."[2] The blood royal never pays, we say. It obtains service, gifts, supplies, furtherance of all kinds from the love and joy of those who feel themselves honored by the service they render.

Dull people think it Fortune that makes one rich and another poor. Is it? Yes, but the for-

tune was earlier than they think, namely, in the balance or adjustment between devotion to what is agreeable to-day and the forecast of what will be valuable to-morrow.

Certainly I am not going to argue the merits of gradation in the universe; the existing order of more or less. Neither do I wish to go into a vindication of the justice that disposes the variety of lot. I know how steep the contrast of condition looks; such excess here and such destitution there; like entire chance, like the freaks of the wind, heaping the snow-drift in gorges, stripping the plain; such despotism of wealth and comfort in banquet-halls, whilst death is in the pots of the wretched, — that it behooves a good man to walk with tenderness and heed amidst so much suffering.' I only point in passing to the order of the universe, which makes a rotation, — not like the coarse policy of the Greeks, ten generals, each commanding one day and then giving place to the next, or like our democratic politics, my turn now, your turn next, — but the constitution of things has distributed a new quality or talent to each mind, and the revolution of things is always bringing the need, now of this, now of that, and is sure to bring home the opportunity to every one.

The only relief that I know against the invidiousness of superior position is, that you exert your faculty; for whilst each does that, he excludes hard thoughts from the spectator. All right activity is amiable. I never feel that any man occupies my place, but that the reason why I do not have what I wish, is, that I want the faculty which entitles. All spiritual or real power makes its own place.

We pass for what we are, and we prosper or fail by what we are. There are men who may dare much and will be justified in their daring. But it is because they know they are in their place. As long as I am in my place, I am safe. "The best lightning-rod for your protection is your own spine." Let a man's social aims be proportioned to his means and power. I do not pity the misery of a man underplaced: that will right itself presently: but I pity the man overplaced. A certain quantity of power belongs to a certain quantity of faculty. Whoever wants more power than is the legitimate attraction of his faculty, is a politician, and must pay for that excess; must truckle for it. This is the whole game of society and the politics of the world. Being will always seem well; — but whether possibly I cannot contrive to seem, without the trouble of being?

Every Frenchman would have a career. We English are not any better with our love of making a figure. "I told the Duke of Newcastle," says Bubb Dodington in his Memoirs, "that it must end one way or another, it must not remain as it was; for I was determined to make some sort of a figure in life; I earnestly wished it might be under his protection, but if that could not be, I must make some figure; what it would be I could not determine yet; I must look round me a little and consult my friends, but some figure I was resolved to make."

It will be agreed everywhere that society must have the benefit of the best leaders. How to obtain them? Birth has been tried and failed. Caste in India has no good result. Ennobling of one family is good for one generation; not sure beyond. Slavery had mischief enough to answer for, but it had this good in it, — the pricing of men. In the South a slave was bluntly but accurately valued at five hundred to a thousand dollars, if a good field-hand; if a mechanic, as carpenter or smith, twelve hundred or two thousand. In Rome or Greece what sums would not be paid for a superior slave, a confidential secretary and manager, an educated slave; a man of genius, a Moses educated in Egypt? I don't

know how much Epictetus was sold for, or Æsop, or Toussaint l'Ouverture, and perhaps it was not a good market-day.' Time was, in England, when the state stipulated beforehand what price should be paid for each citizen's life, if he was killed. Now, if it were possible, I should like to see that appraisal applied to every man, and every man made acquainted with the true number and weight of every adult citizen, and that he be placed where he belongs, with so much power confided to him as he could carry and use.

In the absence of such anthropometer I have a perfect confidence in the natural laws. I think that the community — every community, if obstructing laws and usages are removed — will be the best measure and the justest judge of the citizen, or will in the long run give the fairest verdict and reward; better than any royal patronage; better than any premium on race; better than any statute elevating families to hereditary distinction, or any class to sacerdotal education and power. The verdict of battles will best prove the general; the town-meeting, the Congress, will not fail to find out legislative talent. The prerogatives of a right physician are determined, not by his diplomas, but by the health he re-

stores to body and mind; the powers of a geometer by solving his problem; of a priest by the act of inspiring us with a sentiment which disperses the grief from which we suffered. When the lawyer tries his case in court he himself is also on trial and his own merits appear as well as his client's. When old writers are consulted by young writers who have written their first book, they say, Publish it by all means; so only can you certainly know its quality.

But we venture to put any man in any place. It is curious how negligent the public is of the essential qualifications of its representatives. They ask if a man is a Republican, a Democrat? Yes. Is he a man of talent? Yes. Is he honest and not looking for an office or any manner of bribe? He is honest. Well then choose him by acclamation. And they go home and tell their wives with great satisfaction what a good thing they have done. But they forgot to ask the fourth question, not less important than either of the others, and without which the others do not avail. Has he a will? Can he carry his points against opposition? Probably not.[1] It is not sufficient that your work follows your genius, or is organic, to give you the magnetic power over men. More than taste and talent

must go to the Will. That must also be a gift of Nature. It is in some; it is not in others. But I should say, if it is not in you, you had better not put yourself in places where not to have it is to be a public enemy.

The expectation and claims of mankind indicate the duties of this class. Some service they must pay. We do not expect them to be saints, and it is very pleasing to see the instinct of mankind on this matter, — how much they will forgive to such as pay substantial service and work energetically after their kind; but they do not extend the same indulgence to those who claim and enjoy the same prerogative but render no returns. The day is darkened when the golden river runs down into mud; when genius grows idle and wanton and reckless of its fine duties of being Saint, Prophet, Inspirer to its humble fellows, balks their respect and confounds their understanding by silly extravagances. To a right aristocracy, to Hercules, to Theseus, Odin, the Cid, Napoleon; to Sir Robert Walpole, to Fox, Chatham, Mirabeau, Jefferson, O'Connell; — to the men, that is, who are incomparably superior to the populace in ways agreeable to the populace, showing them the way they should go, doing for them what they wish done and cannot

do; — of course everything will be permitted and pardoned, — gaming, drinking, fighting, luxury. These are the heads of party, who can do no wrong, — everything short of infamous crime will pass. But if those who merely sit in their places and are not, like them, able; if the dressed and perfumed gentleman, who serves the people in no wise and adorns them not, is not even *not afraid of them*, if such an one go about to set ill examples and corrupt them, who shall blame them if they burn his barns, insult his children, assault his person, and express their unequivocal indignation and contempt? He eats their bread, he does not scorn to live by their labor, and after breakfast he cannot remember that there are human beings. To live without duties is obscene.[1]

2. Genius, what is so called in strictness, — the power to affect the Imagination, as possessed by the orator, the poet, the novelist or the artist, — has a royal right in all possessions and privileges, being itself representative and accepted by all men as their delegate. It has indeed the best right, because it raises men above themselves, intoxicates them with beauty. They are honored by rendering it honor, and the reason of this allowance is that Genius unlocks for all men

the chains of use, temperament and drudgery, and gives them a sense of delicious liberty and power.

The first example that occurs is an extraordinary gift of eloquence. A man who has that possession of his means and that magnetism that he can at all times carry the convictions of a public assembly, we must respect, and he is thereby ennobled. He has the freedom of the city. He is entitled to neglect trifles. Like a great general, or a great poet, or a millionaire, he may wear his coat out at elbows, and his hat on his feet, if he will. He has established relation, representativeness. The best feat of genius is to bring all the varieties of talent and culture into its audience; the mediocre and the dull are reached as well as the intelligent. I have seen it conspicuously shown in a village. Here are classes which day by day have no intercourse, nothing beyond perhaps a surly nod in passing. But I have seen a man of teeming brain come among these men, so full of his facts, so unable to suppress them, that he has poured out a river of knowledge to all comers, and drawing all these men round him, all sorts of men, interested the whole village, good and bad, bright and stupid, in his facts; the iron boundary lines had all faded

away; the stupid had discovered that they were not stupid; the coldest had found themselves drawn to their neighbors by interest in the same things. This was a naturalist.[1]

The more familiar examples of this power certainly are those who establish a wider dominion over men's minds than any speech can; who think, and paint, and laugh, and weep, in their eloquent closets, and then convert the world into a huge whispering-gallery, to report the tale to all men, and win smiles and tears from many generations. The eminent examples are Shakspeare, Cervantes, Bunyan, Burns, Scott, and now we must add Dickens. In the fine arts, I find none in the present age who have any popular power, who have achieved any nobility by ennobling the people.

3. Elevation of sentiment, refining and inspiring the manners, must really take the place of every distinction whether of material power or of intellectual gifts. The manners of course must have that depth and firmness of tone to attest their centrality in the nature of the man. I mean the things themselves shall be judges, and determine. In the presence of this nobility even genius must stand aside. For the two poles of nature are Beauty and Meanness, and noble

sentiment is the highest form of Beauty.' He is beautiful in face, in port, in manners, who is absorbed in objects which he truly believes to be superior to himself. Is there any parchment or any cosmetic or any blood that can obtain homage like that security of air presupposing so undoubtingly the sympathy of men in his designs? What is it that makes the true knight? Loyalty to his thought. That makes the beautiful scorn, the elegant simplicity, the directness, the commanding port which all men admire and which men not noble affect. For the thought has no debts, no hunger, no lusts, no low obligations or relations, no intrigue or business, no murder, no envy, no crime, but large leisures and an inviting future.[2]

The service we receive from the great is a mutual deference. If you deal with the vulgar, life is reduced to beggary indeed. The astronomers are very eager to know whether the moon has an atmosphere; I am only concerned that every man have one. I observe, however, that it takes two to make an atmosphere. I am acquainted with persons who go attended with this ambient cloud. It is sufficient that they come. It is not important what they say. The sun and the evening sky are not calmer. They seem to

have arrived at the fact, to have got rid of the show, and to be serene. Their manners and behavior in the house and in the field are those of men at rest: what have they to conceal? what have they to exhibit? Others I meet, who have no deference, and who denude and strip one of all attributes but material values. As much health and muscle as you have, as much land, as much house-room and dinner, avails. Of course a man is a poor bag of bones. There is no gracious interval, not an inch allowed. Bone rubs against bone. Life is thus a Beggar's Bush. I know nothing which induces so base and forlorn a feeling as when we are treated for our utilities, as economists do, starving the imagination and the sentiment. In this impoverishing animation, I seem to meet a Hunger, a wolf. Rather let us be alone whilst we live, than encounter these lean kine. Man should emancipate man. He does so, not by jamming him, but by distancing him. The nearer my friend, the more spacious is our realm, the more diameter our spheres have. It is a measure of culture, the number of things taken for granted. When a man begins to speak, the churl will take him up by disputing his first words, so he cannot come at his scope. The wise man takes

all for granted until he sees the parallelism of that which puzzled him with his own view.'

I will not protract this discourse by describing the duties of the brave and generous. And yet I will venture to name one, and the same is almost the sole condition on which knighthood is to be won; this, namely, loyalty to your own order. The true aristocrat is he who is at the head of his own order, and disloyalty is to mistake other chivalries for his own.[2] Let him not divide his homage, but stand for that which he was born and set to maintain. It was objected to Gustavus that he did not better distinguish between the duties of a carabine and a general, but exposed himself to all dangers and was too prodigal of a blood so precious. For a soul on which elevated duties are laid will so realize its special and lofty duties as not to be in danger of assuming through a low generosity those which do not belong to it.

There are all degrees of nobility, but amid the levity and giddiness of people one looks round, as for a tower of strength, on some self-dependent mind, who does not go abroad for an estimate, and has long ago made up its conclusion that it is impossible to fail.[3] The great Indian sages had a lesson for the Brahmin,

which every day returns to mind, "All that depends on another gives pain; all that depends on himself gives pleasure; in these few words is the definition of pleasure and pain." The noble mind is here to teach us that failure is a part of success. Prosperity and pound-cake are for very young gentlemen, whom such things content; but a hero's, a man's success is made up of failures, because he experiments and ventures every day, and "the more falls he gets, moves faster on;"[1] defeated all the time and yet to victory born. I have heard that in horsemanship he is not the good rider who never was thrown, but rather that a man never will be a good rider until he is thrown; then he will not be haunted any longer by the terror that he shall tumble, and will ride; — that is his business, — to *ride*, whether with falls or whether with none, to ride unto the place whither he is bound. And I know no such unquestionable badge and ensign of a sovereign mind, as that tenacity of purpose which, through all change of companions, of parties, of fortunes, — changes never, bates no jot of heart or hope, but wearies out opposition, and arrives at its port. In his consciousness of deserving success, the caliph Ali constantly neglected the ordinary means of attaining it,[2] and

to the grand interests, a superficial success is of no account. It prospers as well in mistake as in luck, in obstruction and nonsense, as well as among the angels; it reckons fortunes mere paint; difficulty is its delight: perplexity is its noonday: minds that make their way without winds and against tides. But these are rare and difficult examples, we can only indicate them to show how high is the range of the realm of Honor.

I know the feeling of the most ingenious and excellent youth in America; I hear the complaint of the aspirant that we have no prizes offered to the ambition of virtuous young men; that there is no Theban Band; no stern exclusive Legion of Honor, to be entered only by long and real service and patient climbing up all the steps. We have a rich men's aristocracy, plenty of bribes for those who like them; but a grand style of culture, which, without injury, an ardent youth can propose to himself as a Pharos through long dark years, does not exist, and there is no substitute. The youth, having got through the first thickets that oppose his entrance into life, having got into decent society, is left to himself, and falls abroad with too much freedom. But in the hours of insight we rally

against this skepticism. We then see that if the ignorant are around us, the great are much more near ; that there is an order of men, never quite absent, who enroll no names in their archives but of such as are capable of truth. They are gathered in no one chamber ; no chamber would hold them ; but, out of the vast duration of man's race, they tower like mountains, and are present to every mind in proportion to its likeness to theirs. The solitariest man who shares their spirit walks environed by them ; they talk to him, they comfort him, and happy is he who prefers these associates to profane companions. They also take shape in men, in women. There is no heroic trait, no sentiment or thought that will not sometime embody itself in the form of a friend. That highest good of rational existence is always coming to such as reject mean alliances.

One trait more we must celebrate, the self-reliance which is the patent of royal natures. It is so prized a jewel that it is sure to be tested. The rules and discipline are ordered for that. The Golden Table never lacks members ; all its seats are kept full ; but with this strange provision, that the members are carefully withdrawn into deep niches, so that no one of them can see

any other of them, and each believes himself alone. In the presence of the Chapter it is easy for each member to carry himself royally and well; but in the absence of his colleagues and in the presence of mean people he is tempted to accept the low customs of towns. The honor of a member consists in an indifferency to the persons and practices about him, and in the pursuing undisturbed the career of a Brother, as if always in their presence, and as if no other existed. Give up, once for all, the hope of approbation from the people in the street, if you are pursuing great ends. How can they guess your designs?

All reference to models, all comparison with neighboring abilities and reputations, is the road to mediocrity. The generous soul, on arriving in a new port, makes instant preparation for a new voyage. By experiment, by original studies, by secret obedience, he has made a place for himself in the world; stands there a real, substantial, unprecedented person, and when the great come by, as always there are angels walking in the earth, they know him at sight. Effectual service in his own legitimate fashion distinguishes the true man. For he is to know that the distinction of a royal nature is a great heart;

that not Louis Quatorze, not Chesterfield, nor Byron, nor Bonaparte is the model of the Century, but, wherever found, the old renown attaches to the virtues of simple faith and stanch endurance and clear perception and plain speech, and that there is a master grace and dignity communicated by exalted sentiments to a human form, to which utility and even genius must do homage. And it is the sign and badge of this nobility, the drawing his counsel from his own breast. For to every gentleman grave and dangerous duties are proposed. Justice always wants champions. The world waits for him as its defender, for he will find in the well-dressed crowd, yes, in the civility of whole nations, vulgarity of sentiment. In the best parlors of modern society he will find the laughing devil, the civil sneer; in English palaces the London twist, derision, coldness, contempt of the masses, contempt of Ireland, dislike of the Chartist. The English House of Commons is the proudest assembly of gentlemen in the world, yet the genius of the House of Commons, its legitimate expression, is a sneer.[1] In America he shall find deprecation of purism on all questions touching the morals of trade and of social customs, and the narrowest contraction of ethics to the one

duty of paying money. Pay that, and you may play the tyrant at discretion and never look back to the fatal question, — where had you the money that you paid?

I know the difficulties in the way of the man of honor. The man of honor is a man of taste and humanity. By tendency, like all magnanimous men, he is a democrat. But the revolution comes, and does he join the standard of Chartist and outlaw? No, for these have been dragged in their ignorance by furious chiefs to the Red Revolution; they are full of murder, and the student recoils, — and joins the rich. If he cannot vote with the poor, he should stay by himself. Let him accept the position of armed neutrality, abhorring the crimes of the Chartist, abhorring the selfishness of the rich, and say, 'The time will come when these poor *enfans perdus* of revolution will have instructed their party, if only by their fate, and wiser counsels will prevail; the music and the dance of liberty will come up to bright and holy ground and will take me in also. Then I shall not have forfeited my right to speak and act for mankind.' Meantime shame to the fop of learning and philosophy who suffers a vulgarity of speech and habit to blind him to the grosser vulgarity of

pitiless selfishness, and to hide from him the current of Tendency; who abandons his right position of being priest and poet of these impious and unpoetic doers of God's work. You must, for wisdom, for sanity, have some access to the mind and heart of the common humanity. The exclusive excludes himself. No great man has existed who did not rely on the sense and heart of mankind as represented by the good sense of the people, as correcting the modes and over-refinements and class prejudices of the lettered men of the world.

There are certain conditions in the highest degree favorable to the tranquillity of spirit and to that magnanimity we so prize. And mainly the habit of considering large interests, and things in masses, and not too much in detail. The habit of directing large affairs generates a nobility of thought in every mind of average ability. For affairs themselves show the way in which they should be handled; and a good head soon grows wise, and does not govern too much.

Now I believe in the closest affinity between moral and material power. Virtue and genius are always on the direct way to the control of the society in which they are found. It is the interest of society that good men should govern,

and there is always a tendency so to place them. But, for the day that now is, a man of generous spirit will not need to administer public offices or to direct large interests of trade, or war, or politics, or manufacture, but he will use a high prudence in the conduct of life to guard himself from being dissipated on many things. There is no need that he should count the pounds of property or the numbers of agents whom his influence touches; it suffices that his aims are high, that the interest of intellectual and moral beings is paramount with him, that he comes into what is called fine society from higher ground, and he has an elevation of habit which ministers of empires will be forced to see and to remember.

I do not know whether that word Gentleman, although it signifies a leading idea in recent civilization, is a sufficiently broad generalization to convey the deep and grave fact of self-reliance. To many the word expresses only the outsides of cultivated men, — only graceful manners, and independence in trifles; but the fountains of that thought are in the deeps of man, a beauty which reaches through and through, from the manners to the soul; an honor which is only a name for sanctity, a self-trust which is a trust in

God himself. Call it man of honor, or call it Man, the American who would serve his country must learn the beauty and honor of perseverance, he must reinforce himself by the power of character, and revisit the margin of that well from which his fathers drew waters of life and enthusiasm, the fountain I mean of the moral sentiments, the parent fountain from which this goodly Universe flows as a wave.

III

PERPETUAL FORCES

What central flowing forces, say,
Make up thy splendor, matchless day?

No ray is dimmed, no atom worn,
My oldest force is good as new,
And the fresh rose on yonder thorn
Gives back the bending heavens in dew.

PERPETUAL FORCES

THE hero in the fairy-tales has a servant who can eat granite rocks, another who can hear the grass grow, and a third who can run a hundred leagues in half an hour; so man in Nature is surrounded by a gang of friendly giants who can accept harder stints than these, and help him in every kind. Each by itself has a certain omnipotence, but all, like contending kings and emperors, in the presence of each other, are antagonized and kept polite and own the balance of power.

We cannot afford to miss any advantage. Never was any man too strong for his proper work. Art is long, and life short, and he must supply this disproportion by borrowing and applying to his task the energies of Nature. Reinforce his self-respect, show him his means, his arsenal of forces, physical, metaphysical, immortal. Show him the riches of the poor, show him what mighty allies and helpers he has.' And though King David had no good from making his census out of vainglory, yet I find it wholesome and invigorating to enumerate the resources we can command, to look a little into

this arsenal, and see how many rounds of ammunition, what muskets, and how many arms better than Springfield muskets, we can bring to bear.

Go out of doors and get the air. Ah, if you knew what was in the air. See what your robust neighbor, who never feared to live in it, has got from it; strength, cheerfulness, power to convince, heartiness and equality to each event.

All the earths are burnt metals. One half the avoirdupois of the rocks which compose the solid crust of the globe consists of oxygen. The adamant is always passing into smoke; the marble column, the brazen statue burn under the daylight, and would soon decompose if their molecular structure, disturbed by the raging sunlight, were not restored by the darkness of the night. What agencies of electricity, gravity, light, affinity combine to make every plant what it is, and in a manner so quiet that the presence of these tremendous powers is not ordinarily suspected. Faraday said, "A grain of water is known to have electric relations equivalent to a very powerful flash of lightning." The ripe fruit is dropped at last without violence, but the lightning fell and the storm raged, and strata were deposited and uptorn and bent back, and Chaos moved from beneath, to create and flavor the fruit on your

table to-day. The winds and the rains come back a thousand and a thousand times. The coal on your grate gives out in decomposing to-day exactly the same amount of light and heat which was taken from the sunshine in its formation in the leaves and boughs of the antediluvian tree.

Take up a spadeful or a buck-load of loam, who can guess what it holds? But a gardener knows that it is full of peaches, full of oranges, and he drops in a few seeds by way of keys to unlock and combine its virtues; lets it lie in sun and rain, and by and by it has lifted into the air its full weight in golden fruit.'

The earliest hymns of the world were hymns to these natural forces. The Vedas of India, which have a date older than Homer, are hymns to the winds, to the clouds, and to fire. They all have certain properties which adhere to them, such as conservation, persisting to be themselves, impossibility of being warped. The sun has lost no beams, the earth no elements; gravity is as adhesive, heat as expansive, light as joyful, air as virtuous, water as medicinal as on the first day. There is no loss, only transference. When the heat is less here it is not lost, but more heat is there. When the rain exceeds on the coast,

there is drought on the prairie. When the continent sinks, the opposite continent, that is to say, the opposite shore of the ocean, rises. When life is less here, it spawns there.

These forces are in an ascending series, but seem to leave no room for the individual; man or atom, he only shares them; he sails the way these irresistible winds blow. But behind all these are finer elements, the sources of them, and much more rapid and strong; a new style and series, the spiritual. Intellect and morals appear only the material forces on a higher plane. The laws of material nature run up into the invisible world of the mind, and hereby we acquire a key to those sublimities which skulk and hide in the caverns of human consciousness. And in the impenetrable mystery which hides — and hides through absolute transparency — the mental nature, I await the insight which our advancing knowledge of material laws shall furnish.'

But the laws of force apply to every form of it. The husbandry learned in the economy of heat or light or steam or muscular fibre applies precisely to the use of wit. What I have said of the inexorable persistence of every elemental force to remain itself, the impossibility of tampering with it or warping it, — the same rule

applies again strictly to this force of intellect; that it is perception, a seeing, not making, thoughts. The man must bend to the law, never the law to him.

The brain of man has methods and arrangements corresponding to these material powers, by which he can use them. See how trivial is the use of the world by any other of its creatures. Whilst these forces act on us from the outside and we are not in their counsel, we call them Fate. The animal instincts guide the animal as gravity governs the stone, and in man that bias or direction of his constitution is often as tyrannical as gravity. We call it temperament, and it seems to be the remains of wolf, ape, and rattlesnake in him. While the reason is yet dormant, this rules; as the reflective faculties open, this subsides. We come to reason and knowledge; we see the causes of evils and learn to parry them and use them as instruments, by knowledge, being inside of them and dealing with them as the Creator does. It is curious to see how a creature so feeble and vulnerable as a man, who, unarmed, is no match for the wild beasts, tiger, or crocodile, none for the frost, none for the sea, none for a fog, or a damp air, or the feeble fork of a poor worm, —

each of a thousand petty accidents puts him to death every day, — is yet able to subdue to his will these terrific forces, and more than these. His whole frame is responsive to the world, part for part, every sense, every pore to a new element, so that he seems to have as many talents as there are qualities in Nature. No force but is his force. He does not possess them, he is a pipe through which their currents flow. If a straw be held still in the direction of the ocean-current, the sea will pour through it as through Gibraltar. If he should measure strength with them, if he should fight the sea and the whirlwind with his ship, he would snap his spars, tear his sails, and swamp his bark; but by cunningly dividing the force, tapping the tempest for a little side-wind, he uses the monsters, and they carry him where he would go. Look at him; you can give no guess at what power is in him. It never appears directly, but follow him and see his effects, see his productions. He is a planter, a miner, a shipbuilder, a machinist, a musician, a steam-engine, a geometer, an astronomer, a persuader of men, a lawgiver, a builder of towns; — and each of these by dint of a wonderful method or series that resides in him and enables him to work on the material elements.[1]

We are surrounded by human thought and labor. Where are the farmer's days gone? See, they are hid in that stone wall, in that excavated trench, in the harvest grown on what was shingle and pine-barren. He put his days into carting from the distant swamp the mountain of muck which has been trundled about until it now makes the cover of fruitful soil. Labor hides itself in every mode and form. It is massed and blocked away in that stone house, for five hundred years. It is twisted and screwed into fragrant hay which fills the barn. It surprises in the perfect form and condition of trees clean of caterpillars and borers, rightly pruned, and loaded with grafted fruit. It is under the house in the well; it is over the house in slates and copper and water-spout; it grows in the corn; it delights us in the flower-bed; it keeps the cow out of the garden, the rain out of the library, the miasma out of the town. It is in dress, in pictures, in ships, in cannon; in every spectacle, in odors, in flavors, in sweet sounds, in works of safety, of delight, of wrath, of science.

The thoughts, no man ever saw, but disorder becomes order where he goes; weakness becomes power; surprising and admirable effects

follow him like a creator. All forces are his; as the wise merchant by truth in his dealings finds his credit unlimited, — he can use in turn, as he wants it, all the property in the world, — so a man draws on all the air for his occasions, as if there were no other breather; on all the water as if there were no other sailor; he is warmed by the sun, and so of every element; he walks and works by the aid of gravitation; he draws on all knowledge as his province, on all beauty for his innocent delight, and first or last he exhausts by his use all the harvests, all the powers of the world. For man, the receiver of all, and depositary of these volumes of power, I am to say that his ability and performance are according to his reception of these various streams of force. We define Genius to be a sensibility to all the impressions of the outer world, a sensibility so equal that it receives accurately all impressions, and can truly report them, without excess or loss, as it received. It must not only receive all, but it must render all. And the health of man is an equality of inlet and outlet, gathering and giving. Any hoarding is tumor and disease.

If we were truly to take account of stock before the last Court of Appeals, — that were

an inventory! What are my resources? "Our stock in life, our real estate, is that amount of thought which we have had," — and which we have applied, and so domesticated. The ground we have thus created is forever a fund for new thoughts. A few moral maxims confirmed by much experience would stand high on the list, constituting a supreme prudence. Then the knowledge unutterable of our private strength, of where it lies, of its accesses and facilitations, and of its obstructions. My conviction of principles, — that is great part of my possessions. Certain thoughts, certain observations, long familiar to me in night-watches and daylights, would be my capital if I removed to Spain or China, or, by stranger translation, to the planet Jupiter or Mars, or to new spiritual societies. Every valuable person who joins in an enterprise, — is it a piece of industry, or the founding of a colony or a college, the reform of some public abuse, or some effort of patriotism, — what he chiefly brings, all he brings, is not his land or his money or body's strength, but his thoughts, his way of classifying and seeing things, his method. And thus with every one a new power. In proportion to the depth of the insight is the power and reach of the kingdom he controls.

It would be easy to awake wonder by sketching the performance of each of these mental forces; as of the diving-bell of the Memory, which descends into the deeps of our past and oldest experience and brings up every lost jewel; or of the Fancy, which sends its gay balloon aloft into the sky to catch every tint and gleam of romance; of the Imagination, which turns every dull fact into pictures and poetry, by making it an emblem of thought. What a power, when, combined with the analyzing understanding, it makes Eloquence; the art of compelling belief, the art of making peoples' hearts dance to his pipe! And not less, method, patience, self-trust, perseverance, love, desire of knowledge, the passion for truth. These are the angels that take us by the hand, these our immortal, invulnerable guardians. By their strength we are strong, and on the signal occasions in our career their inspirations flow to us and make the selfish and protected and tenderly bred person strong for his duty, wise in counsel, skilful in action, competent to rule, willing to obey.

I delight in tracing these wonderful powers, the electricity and gravity of the human world. The power of persistence, of enduring defeat and of gaining victory by defeats, is one of these

forces which never loses its charm.' The power of a man increases steadily by continuance in one direction. He becomes acquainted with the resistances, and with his own tools; increases his skill and strength and learns the favorable moments and favorable accidents. He is his own apprentice, and more time gives a great addition of power, just as a falling body acquires momentum with every foot of the fall. How we prize a good continuer! I knew a manufacturer who found his property invested in chemical works which were depreciating in value. He undertook the charge of them himself, began at the beginning, learned chemistry and acquainted himself with all the conditions of the manufacture. His friends dissuaded him, advised him to give up the work, which was not suited to the country. Why throw good money after bad? But he persisted, and after many years succeeded in his production of the right article for commerce, brought up the stock of his mills to par, and then sold out his interest, having accomplished the reform that was required.

In each the talent is the perception of an order and series in the department he deals with, — of an order and series which preëxisted in Nature, and which this mind sees and conforms to.

The geometer shows us the true order in figures; the painter in laws of color; the dancer in grace. Bonaparte, with his celerity of combination, mute, unfathomable, reads the geography of Europe as if his eyes were telescopes; his will is an immense battery discharging irresistible volleys of power always at the right point in the right time.

There was a story in the journals of a poor prisoner in a Western police-court who was told he might be released if he would pay his fine. He had no money, he had no friends, but he took his flute out of his pocket and began to play, to the surprise, and, as it proved, to the delight of all the company; the jurors waked up, the sheriff forgot his duty, the judge himself beat time, and the prisoner was by general consent of court and officers allowed to go his way without any money. And I suppose, if he could have played loud enough, we here should have beat time, and the whole population of the globe would beat time, and consent that he should go without his fine.'

I knew a stupid young farmer, churlish, living only for his gains, and with whom the only intercourse you could have was to buy what he had to sell. One day I found his little boy of

four years dragging about after him the prettiest little wooden cart, so neatly built, and with decorations too, and learned that Papa had made it; that hidden deep in that thick skull was this gentle art and taste which the little fingers and caresses of his son had the power to draw out into day; he was no peasant after all. So near to us is the flowering of Fine Art in the rudest population. See in a circle of school-girls one with no beauty, no special vivacity, — but she can so recite her adventures that she is never alone, but at night or at morning wherever she sits the inevitable circle gathers around her, willing prisoners of that wonderful memory and fancy and spirit of life. Would you know where to find her? Listen for the laughter, follow the cheerful hum, see where is the rapt attention, and a pretty crowd all bright with one electricity; there in the centre of fellowship and joy is Scheherazade again.

See how rich life is; rich in private talents, each of which charms us in turn and seems the best. If we hear music we give up all to that; if we fall in with a cricket-club and see the game masterly played, the best player is the first of men; if we go to the regatta, we forget the bowler for the stroke oar; and when the soldier

comes home from the fight, he fills all eyes. But the soldier has the same admiration of the great parliamentary debater. And poetry and literature are disdainful of all these claims beside their own. Like the boy who thought in turn each one of the four seasons the best, and each of the three hundred and sixty-five days in the year the crowner. The sensibility is all.'

Every one knows what are the effects of music to put people in gay or mournful or martial mood. But these are the effects on dull subjects, and only the hint of its power on a keener sense. It is a stroke on a loose or tense cord. The story of Orpheus, of Arion, of the Arabian minstrel, are not fables, but experiments on the same iron at white heat.

By this wondrous susceptibility to all the impressions of Nature the man finds himself the receptacle of celestial thoughts, of happy relations to all men. The imagination enriches him, as if there were no other; the memory opens all her cabinets and archives; Science her length and breadth; Poetry her splendor and joy and the august circles of eternal law. These are means and stairs for new ascensions of the mind. But they are nowise impoverished for any other mind, not tarnished, not breathed upon; for the

mighty Intellect did not stoop to him and become property, but he rose to it and followed its circuits. "It is ours while we use it, it is not ours when we do not use it."

And so, one step higher, when he comes into the realm of sentiment and will. He sees the grandeur of justice, the victory of love, the eternity that belongs to all moral nature. He does not then invent his sentiment or his act, but obeys a preexisting right which he sees. We arrive at virtue by taking its direction instead of imposing ours.[2]

The last revelation of intellect and of sentiment is that in a manner it severs the man from all other men; makes known to him that the spiritual powers are sufficient to him if no other being existed; that he is to deal absolutely in the world, as if he alone were a system and a state, and though all should perish could make all anew.

The forces are infinite. Every one has the might of all, for the secret of the world is that its energies are *solidaires*; that they work together on a system of mutual aid, all for each and each for all; that the strain made on one point bears on every arch and foundation of the structure. But if you wish to avail yourself

of their might, and in like manner if you wish the force of the intellect, the force of the will, you must take their divine direction, not they yours. Obedience alone gives the right to command.' It is like the village operator who taps the telegraph-wire and surprises the secrets of empires as they pass to the capital. So this child of the dust throws himself by obedience into the circuit of the heavenly wisdom, and shares the secret of God.

Thus is the world delivered into your hand, but on two conditions, — not for property, but for use, use according to the noble nature of the gifts; and not for toys, not for self-indulgence. Things work to their ends, not to yours, and will certainly defeat any adventurer who fights against this ordination.

The effort of men is to use them for private ends. They wish to pocket land and water and fire and air and all fruits of these, for property, and would like to have Aladdin's lamp to compel darkness, and iron-bound doors, and hostile armies, and lions and serpents to serve them like footmen. And they wish the same service from the spiritual faculties. A man has a rare mathematical talent, inviting him to the beautiful secrets of geometry, and wishes to clap a patent

on it; or has the fancy and invention of a poet, and says, 'I will write a play that shall be repeated in London a hundred nights;' or a military genius, and instead of using that to defend his country, he says, 'I will fight the battle so as to give me place and political consideration;' or Canning or Thurlow has a genius of debate, and says, 'I will know how with this weapon to defend the cause that will pay best and make me Chancellor or Foreign Secretary.' But this perversion is punished with instant loss of true wisdom and real power

I find the survey of these cosmical powers a doctrine of consolation in the dark hours of private or public fortune. It shows us the world alive, guided, incorruptible; that its cannon cannot be stolen nor its virtues misapplied. It shows us the long Providence, the safeguards of rectitude. It animates exertion; it warns us out of that despair into which Saxon men are prone to fall, — out of an idolatry of forms, instead of working to simple ends, in the belief that Heaven always succors us in working for these. This world belongs to the energetical. It is a fagot of laws, and a true analysis of these laws, showing how immortal and how self-protecting they are, would be a wholesome lesson

for every time and for this time. That band which ties them together is unity, is universal good, saturating all with one being and aim, so that each translates the other, is only the same spirit applied to new departments. Things are saturated with the moral law. There is no escape from it. Violets and grass preach it; rain and snow, wind and tides, every change, every cause in Nature is nothing but a disguised missionary.[1]

All our political disasters grow as logically out of our attempts in the past to do without justice, as the sinking of some part of your house comes of defect in the foundation. One thing is plain; a certain personal virtue is essential to freedom; and it begins to be doubtful whether our corruption in this country has not gone a little over the mark of safety, so that when canvassed we shall be found to be made up of a majority of reckless self-seekers. The divine knowledge has ebbed out of us and we do not know enough to be free.[2]

I hope better of the State. Half a man's wisdom goes with his courage. A boy who knows that a bully lives round the corner which he must pass on his daily way to school, is apt to take sinister views of streets and of school education. And a sensitive politician suffers his ideas of the

part New York or Pennsylvania or Ohio is to play in the future of the Union, to be fashioned by the election of rogues in some counties. But we must not gratify the rogues so deeply. There is a speedy limit to profligate politics.

Fear disenchants life and the world. If I have not my own respect I am an impostor, not entitled to other men's, and had better creep into my grave. I admire the sentiment of Thoreau, who said, "Nothing is so much to be feared as fear; God himself likes atheism better." For the world is a battle-ground; every principle is a war-note, and the most quiet and protected life is at any moment exposed to incidents which test your firmness. The illusion that strikes me as the masterpiece in that ring of illusions which our life is, is the timidity with which we assert our moral sentiment. We are made of it, the world is built by it, things endure as they share it; all beauty, all health, all intelligence exist by it; yet we shrink to speak of it or to range ourselves by its side. Nay, we presume strength of him or them who deny it. Cities go against it; the college goes against it, the courts snatch at any precedent, at any vicious form of law to rule it out; legislatures listen with appetite to declamations against it, and vote it down. Every

new asserter of the right surprises us, like a man joining the church, and we hardly dare believe he is in earnest.[1]

What we do and suffer is in moments, but the cause of right for which we labor never dies, works in long periods, can afford many checks, gains by our defeats, and will know how to compensate our extremest sacrifice. Wrath and petulance may have their short success, but they quickly reach their brief date and decompose, whilst the massive might of ideas is irresistible at last. Whence does the knowledge come? Where is the source of power? The soul of God is poured into the world through the thoughts of men. The world stands on ideas, and not on iron or cotton; and the iron of iron, the fire of fire, the ether and source of all the elements is moral force. As cloud on cloud, as snow on snow, as the bird on the air, and the planet on space in its flight, so do nations of men and their institutions rest on thoughts.[2]

IV

CHARACTER

Shun passion, fold the hands of thrift,
Sit still, and Truth is near;
Suddenly it will uplift
Your eyelids to the sphere:
Wait a little, you shall see
The portraiture of things to be.

For what need I of book or priest
Or Sibyl from the mummied East
When every star is Bethlehem Star, —
I count as many as there are
Cinquefoils or violets in the grass,
So many saints and saviours,
So many high behaviours.

CHARACTER

MORALS respects what men call goodness, that which all men agree to honor as justice, truth-speaking, good will and good works. Morals respects the source or motive of this action. It is the science of substances, not of shows. It is the *what*, and not the *how*. It is that which all men profess to regard, and by their real respect for which recommend themselves to each other.

There is this eternal advantage to morals, that, in the question between truth and goodness, the moral cause of the world lies behind all else in the mind. It was for good, it is to good, that all works. Surely it is not to prove or show the truth of things, — that sounds a little cold and scholastic, — no, it is for benefit, that all subsists. As we say in our modern politics, catching at last the language of morals, that the object of the State is the greatest good of the greatest number, — so, the reason we must give for the existence of the world is, that it is for the benefit of all being.

Morals implies freedom and will. The will constitutes the man. He has his life in Nature,

like a beast: but choice is born in him; here is he that chooses; here is the Declaration of Independence, the July Fourth of zoölogy and astronomy. He chooses, — as the rest of the creation does not. But will, pure and perceiving, is not wilfulness. When a man, through stubbornness, insists to do this or that, something absurd or whimsical, only because he will, he is weak; he blows with his lips against the tempest, he dams the incoming ocean with his cane. It were an unspeakable calamity if any one should think he had the right to impose a private will on others. That is the part of a striker, an assassin. All violence, all that is dreary and repels, is not power but the absence of power.

Morals is the direction of the will on universal ends. He is immoral who is acting to any private end. He is moral, — we say it with Marcus Aurelius and with Kant, — whose aim or motive may become a universal rule, binding on all intelligent beings; and with Vauvenargues, "the mercenary sacrifice of the public good to a private interest is the eternal stamp of vice."[1]

All the virtues are special directions of this motive; justice is the application of this good of the whole to the affairs of each one; courage

is contempt of danger in the determination to see this good of the whole enacted; love is delight in the preference of that benefit redounding to another over the securing of our own share; humility is a sentiment of our insignificance when the benefit of the universe is considered.

If from these external statements we seek to come a little nearer to the fact, our first experiences in moral, as in intellectual nature, force us to discriminate a universal mind, identical in all men. Certain biases, talents, executive skills, are special to each individual; but the high, contemplative, all-commanding vision, the sense of Right and Wrong, is alike in all. Its attributes are self-existence, eternity, intuition and command. It is the mind of the mind. We belong to it, not it to us. It is in all men, and constitutes them men. In bad men it is dormant, as health is in men entranced or drunken; but, however inoperative, it exists underneath whatever vices and errors. The extreme simplicity of this intuition embarrasses every attempt at analysis. We can only mark, one by one, the perfections which it combines in every act. It admits of no appeal, looks to no superior essence. It is the reason of things.

The antagonist nature is the individual, formed into a finite body of exact dimensions, with appetites which take from everybody else what they appropriate to themselves, and would enlist the entire spiritual faculty of the individual, if it were possible, in catering for them. On the perpetual conflict between the dictate of this universal mind and the wishes and interests of the individual, the moral discipline of life is built. The one craves a private benefit, which the other requires him to renounce out of respect to the absolute good. Every hour puts the individual in a position where his wishes aim at something which the sentiment of duty forbids him to seek. He that speaks the truth executes no private function of an individual will, but the world utters a sound by his lips. He who doth a just action seeth therein nothing of his own, but an inconceivable nobleness attaches to it, because it is a dictate of the general mind. We have no idea of power so simple and so entire as this. It is the basis of thought, it is the basis of being. Compare all that we call ourselves, all our private and personal venture in the world, with this deep of moral nature in which we lie, and our private good becomes an impertinence, and we take part with hasty shame against ourselves: —

"High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Doth tremble like a guilty thing surprised, —
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet the master-light of all our seeing, —
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence, — truths that wake
To perish never." [1]

The moral element invites man to great enlargements, to find his satisfaction, not in particulars or events, but in the purpose and tendency; not in bread, but in his right to his bread; not in much corn or wool, but in its communication.

Not by adding, then, does the moral sentiment help us; no, but in quite another manner. It puts us in place. It centres, it concentrates us. It puts us at the heart of Nature, where we belong, in the cabinet of science and of causes, there where all the wires terminate which hold the world in magnetic unity, and so converts us into universal beings.

This wonderful sentiment, which endears itself as it is obeyed, seems to be the fountain of intellect; for no talent gives the impression of sanity, if wanting this; nay, it absorbs everything into itself. Truth, Power, Goodness,

Beauty, are its varied names, — faces of one substance, the heart of all. Before it, what are persons, prophets, or seraphim but its passing agents, momentary rays of its light? [1]

The moral sentiment is alone omnipotent. There is no labor or sacrifice to which it will not bring a man, and which it will not make easy. Thus there is no man who will bargain to sell his life, say at the end of a year, for a million or ten millions of gold dollars in hand, or for any temporary pleasures, or for any rank, as of peer or prince; but many a man who does not hesitate to lay down his life for the sake of a truth, or in the cause of his country, or to save his son or his friend. And under the action of this sentiment of the Right, his heart and mind expand above himself, and above Nature.

> Though Love repine, and Reason chafe,
> There came a voice without reply,
> "'T is man's perdition to be safe,
> When for the truth he ought to die." [2]

Such is the difference of the action of the heart within and of the senses without. One is enthusiasm, and the other more or less amounts of horse-power.

Devout men, in the endeavor to express their convictions, have used different images to sug-

gest this latent force; as, the light, the seed, the Spirit, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Dæmon, the still, small voice, etc., — all indicating its power and its latency. It is serenely above all mediation. In all ages, to all men, it saith, *I am;* and he who hears it feels the impiety of wandering from this revelation to any record or to any rival. The poor Jews of the wilderness cried: "Let not the Lord speak to us; let Moses speak to us." But the simple and sincere soul makes the contrary prayer: 'Let no intruder come between thee and me; deal THOU with me; let me know it is thy will, and I ask no more.' The excellence of Jesus, and of every true teacher, is, that he affirms the Divinity in him and in us, — not thrusts himself between it and us. It would instantly indispose us to any person claiming to speak for the Author of Nature, the setting forth any fact or law which we did not find in our consciousness. We should say with Heraclitus: "Come into this smoky cabin; God is here also: approve yourself to him." [1]

We affirm that in all men is this majestic perception and command; that it is the presence of the Eternal in each perishing man; that it distances and degrades all statements of what-

ever saints, heroes, poets, as obscure and confused stammerings before its silent revelation. *They* report the truth. *It* is the truth. When I think of Reason, of Truth, of Virtue, I cannot conceive them as lodged in your soul and lodged in my soul, but that you and I and all souls are lodged in that; and I may easily speak of that adorable nature, there where only I behold it in my dim experiences, in such terms as shall seem to the frivolous, who dare not fathom their consciousness, as profane.' How is a man a man? How can he exist to weave relations of joy and virtue with other souls, but because he is inviolable, anchored at the centre of Truth and Being? In the ever-returning hour of reflection, he says: 'I stand here glad at heart of all the sympathies I can awaken and share, clothing myself with them as with a garment of shelter and beauty, and yet knowing that it is not in the power of all who surround me to take from me the smallest thread I call mine. If all things are taken away, I have still all things in my relation to the Eternal.'

We pretend not to define the way of its access to the private heart. It passes understanding. There was a time when Christianity existed in one child. But if the child had been killed by

Herod, would the element have been lost? God sends his message, if not by one, then quite as well by another. When the Master of the Universe has ends to fulfil, he impresses his will on the structure of minds.

The Divine Mind imparts itself to the single person: his whole duty is to this rule and teaching. The aid which others give us is like that of the mother to the child, — temporary, gestative, a short period of lactation, a nurse's or a governess's care; but on his arrival at a certain maturity, it ceases, and would be hurtful and ridiculous if prolonged. Slowly the body comes to the use of its organs; slowly the soul unfolds itself in the new man. It is partial at first, and honors only some one or some few truths. In its companions it sees other truths honored, and successively finds their foundation also in itself. Then it cuts the cord, and no longer believes "because of thy saying," but because it has recognized them in itself.'

The Divine Mind imparts itself to the single person: but it is also true that men act powerfully on us. There are men who astonish and delight, men who instruct and guide. Some men's words I remember so well that I must often use them to express my thought. Yes,

because I perceive that we have heard the same truth, but they have heard it better. That is only to say, there is degree and gradation throughout Nature; and the Deity does not break his firm laws in respect to imparting truth, more than in imparting material heat and light. Men appear from time to time who receive with more purity and fulness these high communications. But it is only as fast as this hearing from another is authorized by its consent with his own, that it is pure and safe to each; and all receiving from abroad must be controlled by this immense reservation.[1]

It happens now and then, in the ages, that a soul is born which has no weakness of self, which offers no impediment to the Divine Spirit, which comes down into Nature as if only for the benefit of souls, and all its thoughts are perceptions of things as they are, without any infirmity of earth. Such souls are as the apparition of gods among men, and simply by their presence pass judgment on them. Men are forced by their own self-respect to give them a certain attention. Evil men shrink and pay involuntary homage by hiding or apologizing for their action.

When a man is born with a profound moral sentiment, preferring truth, justice and the serv-

ing of all men to any honors or any gain, men readily feel the superiority. They who deal with him are elevated with joy and hope; he lights up the house or the landscape in which he stands. His actions are poetic and miraculous in their eyes. In his presence, or within his influence, every one believes in the immortality of the soul. They feel that the invisible world sympathizes with him. The Arabians delight in expressing the sympathy of the unseen world with holy men.

> When Omar prayed and loved,
> Where Syrian waters roll,
> Aloft the ninth heaven glowed and moved
> To the tread of the jubilant soul.[1]

A chief event of life is the day in which we have encountered a mind that startled us by its large scope. I am in the habit of thinking — not, I hope, out of a partial experience, but confirmed by what I notice in many lives — that to every serious mind Providence sends from time to time five or six or seven teachers who are of the first importance to him in the lessons they have to impart. The highest of these not so much give particular knowledge, as they elevate by sentiment and by their habitual grandeur of view.[2]

Great men serve us as insurrections do in bad governments. The world would run into endless routine, and forms incrust forms, till the life was gone. But the perpetual supply of new genius shocks us with thrills of life, and recalls us to principles. Lucifer's wager in the old drama was, "There is no steadfast man on earth." He is very rare. "A man is already of consequence in the world when it is known that we can implicitly rely on him." See how one noble person dwarfs a whole nation of underlings. This steadfastness we indicate when we praise character.

Character denotes habitual self-possession, habitual regard to interior and constitutional motives, a balance not to be overset or easily disturbed by outward events and opinion, and by implication points to the source of right motive.[1] We sometimes employ the word to express the strong and consistent will of men of mixed motive, but, when used with emphasis, it points to what no events can change, that is, a will built on the reason of things. Such souls do not come in troops: oftenest appear solitary, like a general without his command, because those who can understand and uphold such appear rarely, not many, perhaps not one, in a

generation. And the memory and tradition of such a leader is preserved in some strange way by those who only half understand him, until a true disciple comes, who apprehends and interprets every word.

The sentiment never stops in pure vision, but will be enacted. It affirms not only its truth, but its supremacy. It is not only insight, as science, as fancy, as imagination is; or an entertainment, as friendship and poetry are; but it is a sovereign rule: and the acts which it suggests —as when it impels a man to go forth and impart it to other men, or sets him on some asceticism or some practice of self-examination to hold him to obedience, or some zeal to unite men to abate some nuisance, or establish some reform or charity which it commands — are the homage we render to this sentiment, as compared with the lower regard we pay to other thoughts: and the private or social practices we establish in its honor we call religion.

The sentiment, of course, is the judge and measure of every expression of it, — measures Judaism, Stoicism, Christianity, Buddhism, or whatever philanthropy, or politics, or saint, or seer pretends to speak in its name. The religions we call false were once true. They also were

affirmations of the conscience correcting the evil customs of their times. The populace drag down the gods to their own level, and give them their egotism; whilst in Nature is none at all, God keeping out of sight, and known only as pure law, though resistless. Châteaubriand said, with some irreverence of phrase, If God made man in his image, man has paid him well back. "*Si Dieu a fait l'homme à son image, l'homme l'a bien rendu.*" Every nation is degraded by the goblins it worships instead of this Deity. The Dionysia and Saturnalia of Greece and Rome, the human sacrifice of the Druids, the Sradda of Hindoos, the Purgatory, the Indulgences, and the Inquisition of Popery, the vindictive mythology of Calvinism, are examples of this perversion.

Every particular instruction is speedily embodied in a ritual, is accommodated to humble and gross minds, and corrupted. The moral sentiment is the perpetual critic on these forms, thundering its protest, sometimes in earnest and lofty rebuke; but sometimes also it is the source, in natures less pure, of sneers and flippant jokes of common people, who feel that the forms and dogmas are not true for them, though they do not see where the error lies.[1]

The religion of one age is the literary entertainment of the next. We use in our idlest poetry and discourse the words Jove, Neptune, Mercury, as mere colors, and can hardly believe that they had to the lively Greek the anxious meaning which, in our towns, is given and received in churches when our religious names are used: and we read with surprise the horror of Athens when, one morning, the statues of Mercury in the temples were found broken, and the like consternation was in the city as if, in Boston, all the Orthodox churches should be burned in one night.

The greatest dominion will be to the deepest thought. The establishment of Christianity in the world does not rest on any miracle but the miracle of being the broadest and most humane doctrine. Christianity was once a schism and protest against the impieties of the time, which had originally been protests against earlier impieties, but had lost their truth. Varnhagen von Ense, writing in Prussia in 1848, says: "The Gospels belong to the most aggressive writings. No leaf thereof could attain the liberty of being printed (in Berlin) to-day. What Mirabeaus, Rousseaus, Diderots, Fichtes, Heines, and many another heretic, one can detect therein!"

But before it was yet a national religion it was alloyed, and, in the hands of hot Africans, of luxurious Byzantines, of fierce Gauls, its creeds were tainted with their barbarism. In Holland, in England, in Scotland, it felt the national narrowness. How unlike our habitual turn of thought was that of the last century in this country! Our ancestors spoke continually of angels and archangels with the same good faith as they would have spoken of their own parents or their late minister. Now the words pale, are rhetoric, and all credence is gone.' Our horizon is not far, say one generation, or thirty years: we all see so much. The older see two generations, or sixty years. But what has been running on through three horizons, or ninety years, looks to all the world like a law of Nature, and 't is an impiety to doubt. Thus, 't is incredible to us, if we look into the religious books of our grandfathers, how they held themselves in such a pinfold. But why not? As far as they could see, through two or three horizons, nothing but ministers and ministers. Calvinism was one and the same thing in Geneva, in Scotland, in Old and New England. If there was a wedding, they had a sermon; if a funeral, then a sermon; if a war, or small-pox, or a comet, or canker-worms,

or a deacon died, — still a sermon: Nature was a pulpit;' the church-warden or tithing-man was a petty persecutor; the presbytery, a tyrant; and in many a house in country places the poor children found seven sabbaths in a week. Fifty or a hundred years ago, prayers were said, morning and evening, in all families; grace was said at table; an exact observance of the Sunday was kept in the houses of laymen as of clergymen. And one sees with some pain the disuse of rites so charged with humanity and aspiration. But it by no means follows, because those offices are much disused, that the men and women are irreligious; certainly not that they have less integrity or sentiment, but only, let us hope, that they see that they can omit the form without loss of real ground; perhaps that they find some violence, some cramping of their freedom of thought, in the constant recurrence of the form.

So of the changed position and manners of the clergy. They have dropped, with the sacerdotal garb and manners of the last century, many doctrines and practices once esteemed indispensable to their order. But the distinctions of the true clergyman are not less decisive. Men ask now, "Is he serious? Is he a sincere man, who lives as he teaches? Is he a benefactor?" So

far the religion is now where it should be. Persons are discriminated as honest, as veracious, as illuminated, as helpful, as having public and universal regards, or otherwise; — are discriminated according to their aims, and not by these ritualities.

The changes are inevitable; the new age cannot see with the eyes of the last. But the change is in what is superficial; the principles are immortal, and the rally on the principle must arrive as people become intellectual. I consider theology to be the rhetoric of morals. The mind of this age has fallen away from theology to morals. I conceive it an advance. I suspect, that, when the theology was most florid and dogmatic, it was the barbarism of the people, and that, in that very time, the best men also fell away from theology, and rested in morals. I think that all the dogmas rest on morals, and that it is only a question of youth or maturity, of more or less fancy in the recipient; that the stern determination to do justly, to speak the truth, to be chaste and humble, was substantially the same, whether under a self-respect, or under a vow made on the knees at the shrine of Madonna.

When once Selden had said that the priests

seemed to him to be baptizing their own fingers, the rite of baptism was getting late in the world. Or when once it is perceived that the English missionaries in India put obstacles in the way of schools (as is alleged), — do not wish to enlighten but to Christianize the Hindoos, — it is seen at once how wide of Christ is English Christianity.

Mankind at large always resemble frivolous children: they are impatient of thought, and wish to be amused. Truth is too simple for us; we do not like those who unmask our illusions. Fontenelle said: "If the Deity should lay bare to the eyes of men the secret system of Nature, the causes by which all the astronomic results are affected, and they finding no magic, no mystic numbers, no fatalities, but the greatest simplicity, I am persuaded they would not be able to suppress a feeling of mortification, and would exclaim, with disappointment, 'Is that all?'" And so we paint over the bareness of ethics with the quaint grotesques of theology.

We boast the triumph of Christianity over Paganism, meaning the victory of the spirit over the senses; but Paganism hides itself in the uniform of the Church. Paganism has only taken the oath of allegiance, taken the cross,

but is Paganism still, outvotes the true men by millions of majority, carries the bag, spends the treasure, writes the tracts, elects the minister, and persecutes the true believer.

There is a certain secular progress of opinion, which, in civil countries, reaches everybody. One service which this age has rendered is, to make the life and wisdom of every past man accessible and available to all. Socrates and Marcus Aurelius are allowed to be saints; Mahomet is no longer accursed; Voltaire is no longer a scarecrow; Spinoza has come to be revered.[1] "The time will come," says Varnhagen von Ense, "when we shall treat the jokes and sallies against the myths and church-rituals of Christianity — say the sarcasms of Voltaire, Frederic the Great, and D'Alembert — good-naturedly and without offence: since, at bottom, those men mean honestly, their polemics proceed out of a religious striving, and what Christ meant and willed is in essence more with them than with their opponents, who only wear and misrepresent the *name* of Christ. . . . Voltaire was an apostle of Christian ideas; only the names were hostile to him, and he never knew it otherwise. He was like the son of the vine-dresser in the Gospel, who said No, and went; the other said Yea,

and went not. These men preached the true God, — Him whom men serve by justice and uprightness; but they called themselves atheists." [1]

When the highest conceptions, the lessons of religion, are imported, the nation is not culminating, has not genius, but is servile. A true nation loves its vernacular tongue. A completed nation will not import its religion. Duty grows everywhere, like children, like grass; and we need not go to Europe or to Asia to learn it.[2] I am not sure that the English religion is not all quoted. Even the Jeremy Taylors, Fullers, George Herberts, steeped, all of them, in Church traditions, are only using their fine fancy to emblazon their memory. 'T is Judæa, not England, which is the ground. So with the mordant Calvinism of Scotland and America. But this quoting distances and disables them: since with every repeater something of creative force is lost, as we feel when we go back to each original moralist. Pythagoras, Socrates, the Stoics, the Hindoo, Behmen, George Fox, — these speak originally; and how many sentences and books we owe to unknown authors, — to writers who were not careful to set down name or date or titles or cities or postmarks in these illuminations!

We, in our turn, want power to drive the

ponderous State. The constitution and law in America must be written on ethical principles, so that the entire power of the spiritual world can be enlisted to hold the loyalty of the citizen, and to repel every enemy as by force of Nature. The laws of old empires stood on the religious convictions. Now that their religions are outgrown, the empires lack strength. Romanism in Europe does not represent the real opinion of enlightened men. The Lutheran Church does not represent in Germany the opinions of the universities. In England, the gentlemen, the journals, and now, at last, churchmen and bishops, have fallen away from the Anglican Church. And in America, where are no legal ties to churches, the looseness appears dangerous.

Our religion has got on as far as Unitarianism. But all the forms grow pale. The walls of the temple are wasted and thin, and, at last, only a film of whitewash, because the mind of our culture has already left our liturgies behind. "Every age," says Varnhagen, "has another sieve for the religious tradition, and will sift it out again. Something is continually lost by this treatment, which posterity cannot recover."

But it is a capital truth that Nature, moral as well as material, is always equal to herself. Ideas

always generate enthusiasm. The creed, the legend, forms of worship, swiftly decay. Morals is the incorruptible essence, very heedless in its richness of any past teacher or witness, heedless of their lives and fortunes. It does not ask whether you are wrong or right in your anecdotes of them; but it is all in all how you stand to your own tribunal.

The lines of the religious sects are very shifting; their platforms unstable; the whole science of theology of great uncertainty, and resting very much on the opinions of who may chance to be the leading doctors of Oxford or Edinburgh, of Princeton or Cambridge, to-day. No man can tell what religious revolutions await us in the next years; and the education in the divinity colleges may well hesitate and vary. But the science of ethics has no mutation; and whoever feels any love or skill for ethical studies may safely lay out all his strength and genius in working in that mine. The pulpit may shake, but this platform will not. All the victories of religion belong to the moral sentiment. Some poor soul beheld the Law blazing through such impediments as he had, and yielded himself to humility and joy. What was gained by being told that it was justification by faith?

The Church, in its ardor for beloved persons, clings to the miraculous, in the vulgar sense, which has even an immoral tendency, as one sees in Greek, Indian and Catholic legends, which are used to gloze every crime. The soul, penetrated with the beatitude which pours into it on all sides, asks no interpositions, no new laws, — the old are good enough for it, — finds in every cart-path of labor ways to heaven, and the humblest lot exalted. Men will learn to put back the emphasis peremptorily on pure morals, always the same, not subject to doubtful interpretation, with no sale of indulgences, no massacre of heretics, no female slaves, no disfranchisement of woman, no stigma on race; to make morals the absolute test, and so uncover and drive out the false religions. There is no vice that has not skulked behind them. It is only yesterday that our American churches, so long silent on Slavery, and notoriously hostile to the Abolitionist, wheeled into line for Emancipation.

I am far from accepting the opinion that the revelations of the moral sentiment are insufficient, as if it furnished a rule only, and not the spirit by which the rule is animated. For I include in these, of course, the history of Jesus, as well as those of every divine soul which in

any place or time delivered any grand lesson to humanity; and I find in the eminent experiences in all times a substantial agreement. The sentiment itself teaches unity of source, and disowns every superiority other than of deeper truth. Jesus has immense claims on the gratitude of mankind, and knew how to guard the integrity of his brother's soul from himself also; but, in his disciples, admiration of him runs away with their reverence for the human soul, and they hamper us with limitations of person and text. Every exaggeration of these is a violation of the soul's right, and inclines the manly reader to lay down the New Testament, to take up the Pagan philosophers.' It is not that the Upanishads or the Maxims of Antoninus are better, but that they do not invade his freedom; because they are only suggestions, whilst the other adds the inadmissible claim of positive authority, — of an external command, where command cannot be. This is the secret of the mischievous result that, in every period of intellectual expansion, the Church ceases to draw into its clergy those who best belong there, the largest and freest minds, and that in its most liberal forms, when such minds enter it, they are coldly received, and find themselves out of place. This charm in the

Pagan moralists, of suggestion, the charm of poetry, of mere truth (easily disengaged from their historical accidents which nobody wishes to force on us), the New Testament loses by its connection with a church. Mankind cannot long suffer this loss, and the office of this age is to put all these writings on the eternal footing of equality of origin in the instincts of the human mind. It is certain that each inspired master will gain instantly by the separation from the idolatry of ages.

To their great honor, the simple and free minds among our clergy have not resisted the voice of Nature and the advanced perceptions of the mind; and every church divides itself into a liberal and expectant class, on one side, and an unwilling and conservative class on the other. As it stands with us now, a few clergymen, with a more theological cast of mind, retain the traditions, but they carry them quietly. In general discourse, they are never obtruded.[1] If the clergyman should travel in France, in England, in Italy, he might leave them locked up in the same closet with his "occasional sermons" at home, and, if he did not return, would never think to send for them. The orthodox clergymen hold a little firmer to theirs, as Calvinism

has a more tenacious vitality; but that is doomed also, and will only die last; for Calvinism rushes to be Unitarianism, as Unitarianism rushes to be pure Theism.

But the inspirations are never withdrawn. In the worst times, men of organic virtue are born, —men and women of native integrity, and indifferently in high and low conditions. There will always be a class of imaginative youths, whom poetry, whom the love of beauty, lead to the adoration of the moral sentiment, and these will provide it with new historic forms and songs. Religion is as inexpugnable as the use of lamps, or of wells, or of chimneys. We must have days and temples and teachers. The Sunday is the core of our civilization, dedicated to thought and reverence. It invites to the noblest solitude and the noblest society, to whatever means and aids of spiritual refreshment. Men may well come together to kindle each other to virtuous living. Confucius said, "If in the morning I hear of the right way, and in the evening die, I can be happy." [1]

The churches already indicate the new spirit in adding to the perennial office of teaching, beneficent activities, — as in creating hospitals, ragged schools, offices of employment for the

poor, appointing almoners to the helpless, guardians of foundlings and orphans. The power that in other times inspired crusades, or the colonization of New England, or the modern revivals, flies to the help of the deaf-mute and the blind, to the education of the sailor and the vagabond boy, to the reform of convicts and harlots, — as the war created the Hilton Head and Charleston missions, the Sanitary Commission, the nurses and teachers at Washington.

In the present tendency of our society, in the new importance of the individual, when thrones are crumbling and presidents and governors are forced every moment to remember their constituencies; when counties and towns are resisting centralization, and the individual voter his party, — society is threatened with actual granulation, religious as well as political. How many people are there in Boston? Some two hundred thousand. Well, then so many sects. Of course each poor soul loses all his old stays; no bishop watches him, no confessor reports that he has neglected the confessional, no class-leader admonishes him of absences, no fagot, no penance, no fine, no rebuke. Is not this wrong? is not this dangerous? 'T is not wrong, but the law

of growth. It is not dangerous, any more than the mother's withdrawing her hands from the tottering babe, at his first walk across the nursery-floor: the child fears and cries, but achieves the feat, instantly tries it again, and never wishes to be assisted more. And this infant soul must learn to walk alone. At first he is forlorn, homeless; but this rude stripping him of all support drives him inward, and he finds himself unhurt; he finds himself face to face with the majestic Presence, reads the original of the Ten Commandments, the original of Gospels and Epistles; nay, his narrow chapel expands to the blue cathedral of the sky, where he

> "Looks in and sees each blissful deity,
> Where he before the thunderous throne doth lie."[1]

To nations or to individuals the progress of opinion is not a loss of moral restraint, but simply a change from coarser to finer checks. No evil can come from reform which a deeper thought will not correct. If there is any tendency in national expansion to form character, religion will not be a loser. There is a fear that pure truth, pure morals, will not make a religion for the affections. Whenever the sublimities of character shall be incarnated in a man, we may rely that awe and love and insatiable curiosity will

follow his steps. Character is the habit of action from the permanent vision of truth. It carries a superiority to all the accidents of life. It compels right relation to every other man, — domesticates itself with strangers and enemies. "But I, father," says the wise Prahlada, in the Vishnu Purana, "know neither friends nor foes, for I behold Kesava in all beings as in my own soul." It confers perpetual insight. It sees that a man's friends and his foes are of his own household, of his own person. What would it avail me, if I could destroy my enemies? There would be as many to-morrow. That which I hate and fear is really in myself, and no knife is long enough to reach to its heart. Confucius said one day to Ke Kang: "Sir, in carrying on your government, why should you use killing at all? Let your evinced desires be for what is good, and the people will be good. The grass must bend, when the wind blows across it." Ke Kang, distressed about the number of thieves in the state, inquired of Confucius how to do away with them. Confucius said, "If you, sir, were not covetous, although you should reward them to do it, they would not steal."

Its methods are subtle, it works without means. It indulges no enmity against any,

knowing, with Prahlada that "the suppression of malignant feeling is itself a reward." The more reason, the less government. In a sensible family, nobody ever hears the words "shall" and "shan't;" nobody commands, and nobody obeys, but all conspire and joyfully cöoperate. Take off the roofs of hundreds of happy houses, and you shall see this order without ruler, and the like in every intelligent and moral society. Command is exceptional, and marks some break in the link of reason; as the electricity goes round the world without a spark or a sound, until there is a break in the wire or the water chain. Swedenborg said, that, "in the spiritual world, when one wishes to rule, or despises others, he is thrust out of doors." Goethe, in discussing the characters in Wilhelm Meister, maintained his belief that "pure loveliness and right good will are the highest manly prerogatives, before which all energetic heroism, with its lustre and renown, must recede." In perfect accord with this, Henry James affirms, that "to give the feminine element in life its hard-earned but eternal supremacy over the masculine has been the secret inspiration of all past history."

There is no end to the sufficiency of character. It can afford to wait; it can do without what is

called success; it cannot but succeed. To a well-principled man existence is victory. He defends himself against failure in his main design by making every inch of the road to it pleasant. There is no trifle, and no obscurity to him: he feels the immensity of the chain whose last link he holds in his hand, and is led by it. Having nothing, this spirit hath all. It asks, with Marcus Aurelius, "What matter by whom the good is done?" It extols humility, — by every self-abasement lifted higher in the scale of being. It makes no stipulations for earthly felicity, — does not ask, in the absoluteness of its trust, even for the assurance of continued life.'

V

EDUCATION

With the key of the secret he marches faster
From strength to strength, and for night brings day,
While classes or tribes too weak to master
The flowing conditions of life, give way.



EDUCATION

A NEW degree of intellectual power seems cheap at any price. The use of the world is that man may learn its laws. And the human race have wisely signified their sense of this, by calling wealth, means, — Man being the end. Language is always wise.

Therefore I praise New England because it is the country in the world where is the freest expenditure for education. We have already taken, at the planting of the Colonies (for aught I know for the first time in the world), the initial step, which for its importance might have been resisted as the most radical of revolutions, thus deciding at the start the destiny of this country, — this, namely, that the poor man, whom the law does not allow to take an ear of corn when starving, nor a pair of shoes for his freezing feet, is allowed to put his hand into the pocket of the rich, and say, You shall educate me, not as you will, but as I will: not alone in the elements, but, by further provision, in the languages, in sciences, in the useful and in elegant arts. The child shall be taken up by the State, and taught, at the public cost, the rudi-

ments of knowledge, and at last, the ripest results of art and science.'

Humanly speaking, the school, the college, society, make the difference between men. All the fairy tales of Aladdin or the invisible Gyges or the talisman that opens kings' palaces or the enchanted halls underground or in the sea, are only fictions to indicate the one miracle of intellectual enlargement. When a man stupid becomes a man inspired, when one and the same man passes out of the torpid into the perceiving state, leaves the din of trifles, the stupor of the senses, to enter into the quasi-omniscience of high thought, — up and down, around, all limits disappear. No horizon shuts down. He sees things in their causes, all facts in their connection.

One of the problems of history is the beginning of civilization. The animals that accompany and serve man make no progress as races. Those called domestic are capable of learning of man a few tricks of utility or amusement, but they cannot communicate the skill to their race. Each individual must be taught anew. The trained dog cannot train another dog. And Man himself in many races retains almost the unteachableness of the beast. For a thousand years the

islands and forests of a great part of the world have been filled with savages who made no steps of advance in art or skill beyond the necessity of being fed and warmed. Certain nations, with a better brain and usually in more temperate climates, have made such progress as to compare with these as these compare with the bear and the wolf.

Victory over things is the office of man. Of course, until it is accomplished, it is the war and insult of things over him. His continual tendency, his great danger, is to overlook the fact that the world is only his teacher, and the nature of sun and moon, plant and animal only means of arousing his interior activity. Enamoured of their beauty, comforted by their convenience, he seeks them as ends, and fast loses sight of the fact that they have worse than no values, that they become noxious, when he becomes their slave.[1]

This apparatus of wants and faculties, this craving body, whose organs ask all the elements and all the functions of Nature for their satisfaction, educate the wondrous creature which they satisfy with light, with heat, with water, with wood, with bread, with wool. The necessities imposed by this most irritable and all-

related texture have taught Man hunting, pasturage, agriculture, commerce, weaving, joining, masonry, geometry, astronomy. Here is a world pierced and belted with natural laws, and fenced and planted with civil partitions and properties, which all put new restraints on the young inhabitant. He too must come into this magic circle of relations, and know health and sickness, the fear of injury, the desire of external good, the charm of riches, the charm of power. The household is a school of power. There, within the door, learn the tragi-comedy of human life. Here is the sincere thing, the wondrous composition for which day and night go round. In that routine are the sacred relations, the passions that bind and sever. Here is poverty and all the wisdom its hated necessities can teach, here labor drudges, here affections glow, here the secrets of character are told, the guards of man, the guards of woman, the compensations which, like angels of justice, pay every debt: the opium of custom, whereof all drink and many go mad. Here is Economy, and Glee, and Hospitality, and Ceremony, and Frankness, and Calamity, and Death, and Hope.'

Every one has a trust of power, — every man, every boy a jurisdiction, whether it be over a

cow or a rood of a potato-field, or a fleet of ships, or the laws of a state. And what activity the desire of power inspires! What toils it sustains! How it sharpens the perceptions and stores the memory with facts. Thus a man may well spend many years of life in trade. It is a constant teaching of the laws of matter and of mind. No dollar of property can be created without some direct communication with Nature, and of course some acquisition of knowledge and practical force. It is a constant contest with the active faculties of men, a study of the issues of one and another course of action, an accumulation of power, and, if the higher faculties of the individual be from time to time quickened, he will gain wisdom and virtue from his business.

As every wind draws music out of the Æolian harp, so doth every object in Nature draw music out of his mind. Is it not true that every landscape I behold, every friend I meet, every act I perform, every pain I suffer, leaves me a different being from that they found me? That poverty, love, authority, anger, sickness, sorrow, success, all work actively upon our being and unlock for us the concealed faculties of the mind? Whatever private or petty ends are

frustrated, this end is always answered. Whatever the man does, or whatever befalls him, opens another chamber in his soul, — that is, he has got a new feeling, a new thought, a new organ. Do we not see how amazingly for this end man is fitted to the world?[1]

What leads him to science? Why does he track in the midnight heaven a pure spark, a luminous patch wandering from age to age, but because he acquires thereby a majestic sense of power; learning that in his own constitution he can set the shining maze in order, and finding and carrying their law in his mind, can, as it were, see his simple idea realized up yonder in giddy distances and frightful periods of duration. If Newton come and first of men perceive that not alone certain bodies fall to the ground at a certain rate, but that all bodies in the Universe, the universe of bodies, fall always, and at one rate; that every atom in Nature draws to every other atom, — he extends the power of his mind not only over every cubic atom of his native planet, but he reports the condition of millions of worlds which his eye never saw.[2] And what is the charm which every ore, every new plant, every new fact touching winds, clouds, ocean currents, the secrets of chemical compo-

sition and decomposition possess for Humboldt? What but that much revolving of similar facts in his mind has shown him that always the mind contains in its transparent chambers the means of classifying the most refractory phenomena, of depriving them of all casual and chaotic aspect, and subordinating them to a bright reason of its own, and so giving to man a sort of property, — yea, the very highest property in every district and particle of the globe.

By the permanence of Nature, minds are trained alike, and made intelligible to each other. In our condition are the roots of language and communication, and these instructions we never exhaust.[1]

In some sort the end of life is that the man should take up the universe into himself, or out of that quarry leave nothing unrepresented. Yonder mountain must migrate into his mind. Yonder magnificent astronomy he is at last to import, fetching away moon, and planet, solstice, period, comet and binal star, by comprehending their relation and law. Instead of the timid stripling he was, he is to be the stalwart Archimedes, Pythagoras, Columbus, Newton, of the physic, metaphysic and ethics of the design of the world.[2]

For truly the population of the globe has its

origin in the aims which their existence is to serve; and so with every portion of them. The truth takes flesh in forms that can express it; and thus in history an idea always overhangs, like the moon, and rules the tide which rises simultaneously in all the souls of a generation.[1]

Whilst thus the world exists for the mind; whilst thus the man is ever invited inward into shining realms of knowledge and power by the shows of the world, which interpret to him the infinitude of his own consciousness, — it becomes the office of a just education to awaken him to the knowledge of this fact.

We learn nothing rightly until we learn the symbolical character of life. Day creeps after day, each full of facts, dull, strange, despised things, that we cannot enough despise, — call heavy, prosaic and desert. The time we seek to kill: the attention it is elegant to divert from things around us. And presently the aroused intellect finds gold and gems in one of these scorned facts, — then finds that the day of facts is a rock of diamonds; that a fact is an Epiphany of God.[2]

We have our theory of life, our religion, our philosophy; and the event of each moment, the shower, the steamboat disaster, the passing of a

beautiful face, the apoplexy of our neighbor, are all tests to try our theory, the approximate result we call truth, and reveal its defects. If I have renounced the search of truth, if I have come into the port of some pretending dogmatism, some new church or old church, some Schelling or Cousin, I have died to all use of these new events that are born out of prolific time into multitude of life every hour. I am as a bankrupt to whom brilliant opportunities offer in vain. He has just foreclosed his freedom, tied his hands, locked himself up and given the key to another to keep.

When I see the doors by which God enters into the mind; that there is no sot or fop, ruffian or pedant into whom thoughts do not enter by passages which the individual never left open, I can expect any revolution in character. "I have hope," said the great Leibnitz, "that society may be reformed, when I see how much education may be reformed."[1].

It is ominous, a presumption of crime, that this word Education has so cold, so hopeless a sound. A treatise on education, a convention for education, a lecture, a system, affects us with slight paralysis and a certain yawning of the jaws. We are not encouraged when the law touches it

with its fingers. Education should be as broad as man. Whatever elements are in him that should foster and demonstrate. If he be dexterous, his tuition should make it appear; if he be capable of dividing men by the trenchant sword of his thought, education should unsheathe and sharpen it; if he is one to cement society by his all-reconciling affinities, oh! hasten their action! If he is jovial, if he is mercurial, if he is great-hearted, a cunning artificer, a strong commander, a potent ally, ingenious, useful, elegant, witty, prophet, diviner, — society has need of all these. The imagination must be addressed. Why always coast on the surface and never open the interior of Nature, not by science, which is surface still, but by poetry? Is not the Vast an element of the mind? Yet what teaching, what book of this day appeals to the Vast?

Our culture has truckled to the times, — to the senses. It is not manworthy. If the vast and the spiritual are omitted, so are the practical and the moral. It does not make us brave or free. We teach boys to be such men as we are. We do not teach them to aspire to be all they can. We do not give them a training as if we believed in their noble nature. We scarce educate their bodies. We do not train the eye and the hand.[1]

We exercise their understandings to the apprehension and comparison of some facts, to a skill in numbers, in words; we aim to make accountants, attorneys, engineers; but not to make able, earnest, great-hearted men. The great object of Education should be commensurate with the object of life. It should be a moral one; to teach self-trust: to inspire the youthful man with an interest in himself; with a curiosity touching his own nature; to acquaint him with the resources of his mind, and to teach him that there is all his strength, and to inflame him with a piety towards the Grand Mind in which he lives. Thus would education conspire with the Divine Providence. A man is a little thing whilst he works by and for himself, but, when he gives voice to the rules of love and justice, is godlike, his word is current in all countries; and all men, though his enemies, are made his friends and obey it as their own.'

In affirming that the moral nature of man is the predominant element and should therefore be mainly consulted in the arrangements of a school, I am very far from wishing that it should swallow up all the other instincts and faculties of man. It should be enthroned in his mind, but if it monopolize the man he is not yet sound, he does

not yet know his wealth. He is in danger of becoming merely devout, and wearisome through the monotony of his thought. It is not less necessary that the intellectual and the active faculties should be nourished and matured. Let us apply to this subject the light of the same torch by which we have looked at all the phenomena of the time; the infinitude, namely, of every man. Everything teaches that.

One fact constitutes all my satisfaction, inspires all my trust, viz., this perpetual youth, which, as long as there is any good in us, we cannot get rid of. It is very certain that the coming age and the departing age seldom understand each other. The old man thinks the young man has no distinct purpose, for he could never get anything intelligible and earnest out of him. Perhaps the young man does not think it worth his while to explain himself to so hard and inapprehensive a confessor. Let him be led up with a long-sighted forbearance, and let not the sallies of his petulance or folly be checked with disgust or indignation or despair.

I call our system a system of despair, and I find all the correction, all the revolution that is needed and that the best spirits of this age promise, in one word, in Hope. Nature, when she

sends a new mind into the world, fills it beforehand with a desire for that which she wishes it to know and do. Let us wait and see what is this new creation, of what new organ the great Spirit had need when it incarnated this new Will. A new Adam in the garden, he is to name all the beasts in the field, all the gods in the sky. And jealous provision seems to have been made in his constitution that you shall not invade and contaminate him with the worn weeds of your language and opinions. The charm of life is this variety of genius, these contrasts and flavors by which Heaven has modulated the identity of truth, and there is a perpetual hankering to violate this individuality, to warp his ways of thinking and behavior to resemble or reflect your thinking and behavior. A low self-love in the parent desires that his child should repeat his character and fortune; an expectation which the child, if justice is done him, will nobly disappoint. By working on the theory that this resemblance exists, we shall do what in us lies to defeat his proper promise and produce the ordinary and mediocre. I suffer whenever I see that common sight of a parent or senior imposing his opinion and way of thinking and being on a young soul to which they are totally unfit.

Cannot we let people be themselves, and enjoy life in their own way? You are trying to make that man another *you*. One's enough.[1]

Or we sacrifice the genius of the pupil, the unknown possibilities of his nature, to a neat and safe uniformity, as the Turks whitewash the costly mosaics of ancient art which the Greeks left on their temple walls. Rather let us have men whose manhood is only the continuation of their boyhood, natural characters still; such are able and fertile for heroic action; and not that sad spectacle with which we are too familiar, educated eyes in uneducated bodies.[2]

I like boys, the masters of the playground and of the street, — boys, who have the same liberal ticket of admission to all shops, factories, armories, town-meetings, caucuses, mobs, target-shootings, as flies have; quite unsuspected, coming in as naturally as the janitor, — known to have no money in their pockets, and themselves not suspecting the value of this poverty; putting nobody on his guard, but seeing the inside of the show, — hearing all the asides. There are no secrets from them, they know everything that befalls in the fire-company, the merits of every engine and of every man at the brakes, how to work it, and are swift to try their hand

at every part; so too the merits of every locomotive on the rails, and will coax the engineer to let them ride with him and pull the handles when it goes to the engine-house. They are there only for fun, and not knowing that they are at school, in the court-house, or the cattle-show, quite as much and more than they were, an hour ago, in the arithmetic class.

They know truth from counterfeit as quick as the chemist does. They detect weakness in your eye and behavior a week before you open your mouth, and have given you the benefit of their opinion quick as a wink. They make no mistakes, have no pedantry, but entire belief on experience. Their elections at baseball or cricket are founded on merit, and are right. They don't pass for swimmers until they can swim, nor for stroke-oar until they can row: and I desire to be saved from their contempt. If I can pass with them, I can manage well enough with their fathers.

Everybody delights in the energy with which boys deal and talk with each other; the mixture of fun and earnest, reproach and coaxing, love and wrath, with which the game is played; — the good-natured yet defiant independence of a leading boy's behavior in the school-yard. How

we envy in later life the happy youths to whom their boisterous games and rough exercise furnish the precise element which frames and sets off their school and college tasks, and teaches them, when least they think it, the use and meaning of these. In their fun and extreme freak they hit on the topmost sense of Horace. The young giant, brown from his hunting-tramp, tells his story well, interlarded with lucky allusions to Homer, to Virgil, to college-songs, to Walter Scott; and Jove and Achilles, partridge and trout, opera and binomial theorem, Cæsar in Gaul, Sherman in Savannah, and hazing in Holworthy, dance through the narrative in merry confusion, yet the logic is good. If he can turn his books to such picturesque account in his fishing and hunting, it is easy to see how his reading and experience, as he has more of both, will interpenetrate each other. And every one desires that this pure vigor of action and wealth of narrative, cheered with so much humor and street rhetoric, should be carried into the habit of the young man, purged of its uproar and rudeness, but with all its vivacity entire. His hunting and campings-out have given him an indispensable base: I wish to add a taste for good company through his impatience of bad.

That stormy genius of his needs a little direction to games, charades, verses of society, song, and a correspondence year by year with his wisest and best friends. Friendship is an order of nobility; from its revelations we come more worthily into nature. Society he must have or he is poor indeed; he gladly enters a school which forbids conceit, affectation, emphasis and dulness, and requires of each only the flower of his nature and experience; requires good will, beauty, wit and select information; teaches by practice the law of conversation, namely, to hear as well as to speak.

Meantime, if circumstances do not permit the high social advantages, solitude has also its lessons. The obscure youth learns there the practice instead of the literature of his virtues; and, because of the disturbing effect of passion and sense, which by a multitude of trifles impede the mind's eye from the quiet search of that fine horizon-line which truth keeps, — the way to knowledge and power has ever been an escape from too much engagement with affairs and possessions; a way, not through plenty and superfluity, but by denial and renunciation, into solitude and privation; and, the more is taken away, the more real and inevitable wealth of

being is made known to us. The solitary knows the essence of the thought, the scholar in society only its fair face. There is no want of example of great men, great benefactors, who have been monks and hermits in habit. The bias of mind is sometimes irresistible in that direction. The man is, as it were, born deaf and dumb, and dedicated to a narrow and lonely life.' Let him study the art of solitude, yield as gracefully as he can to his destiny. Why cannot he get the good of his doom, and if it is from eternity a settled fact that he and society shall be nothing to each other, why need he blush so, and make wry faces to keep up a freshman's seat in the fine world? Heaven often protects valuable souls charged with great secrets, great ideas, by long shutting them up with their own thoughts. And the most genial and amiable of men must alternate society with solitude, and learn its severe lessons.

There comes the period of the imagination to each, a later youth; the power of beauty, the power of books, of poetry. Culture makes his books realities to him, their characters more brilliant, more effective on his mind, than his actual mates. Do not spare to put novels into

the hands of young people as an occasional holiday and experiment; but, above all, good poetry in all kinds, epic, tragedy, lyric. If we can touch the imagination, we serve them, they will never forget it. Let him read Tom Brown at Rugby, read Tom Brown at Oxford, — better yet, read Hodson's Life — Hodson who took prisoner the king of Delhi. They teach the same truth, — a trust, against all appearances, against all privations, in your own worth, and not in tricks, plotting, or patronage.'

I believe that our own experience instructs us that the secret of Education lies in respecting the pupil. It is not for you to choose what he shall know, what he shall do. It is chosen and foreordained, and he only holds the key to his own secret. By your tampering and thwarting and too much governing he may be hindered from his end and kept out of his own. Respect the child. Wait and see the new product of Nature. Nature loves analogies, but not repetitions. Respect the child. Be not too much his parent. Trespass not on his solitude.

But I hear the outcry which replies to this suggestion: — Would you verily throw up the reins of public and private discipline; would

you leave the young child to the mad career of his own passions and whimsies, and call this anarchy a respect for the child's nature? I answer, — Respect the child, respect him to the end, but also respect yourself. Be the companion of his thought, the friend of his friendship, the lover of his virtue, — but no kinsman of his sin. Let him find you so true to yourself that you are the irreconcilable hater of his vice and the imperturbable slighter of his trifling.'

The two points in a boy's training are, to keep his *naturel* and train off all but that: — to keep his *naturel*, but stop off his uproar, fooling and horse-play; — keep his nature and arm it with knowledge in the very direction in which it points. Here are the two capital facts, Genius and Drill. The first is the inspiration in the well-born healthy child, the new perception he has of nature. Somewhat he sees in forms or hears in music or apprehends in mathematics, or believes practicable in mechanics or possible in political society, which no one else sees or hears or believes. This is the perpetual romance of new life, the invasion of God into the old dead world, when he sends into quiet houses a young soul with a thought which is not met,

looking for something which is not there, but which ought to be there: the thought is dim but it is sure, and he casts about restless for means and masters to verify it; he makes wild attempts to explain himself and invoke the aid and consent of the bystanders. Baffled for want of language and methods to convey his meaning, not yet clear to himself, he conceives that though not in this house or town, yet in some other house or town is the wise master who can put him in possession of the rules and instruments to execute his will. Happy this child with a bias, with a thought which entrances him, leads him, now into deserts now into cities, the fool of an idea. Let him follow it in good and in evil report, in good or bad company; it will justify itself; it will lead him at last into the illustrious society of the lovers of truth.

In London, in a private company, I became acquainted with a gentleman, Sir Charles Fellowes, who, being at Xanthus, in the Ægean Sea, had seen a Turk point with his staff to some carved work on the corner of a stone almost buried in the soil. Fellowes scraped away the dirt, was struck with the beauty of the sculptured ornaments, and, looking about him, ob-

served more blocks and fragments like this. He returned to the spot, procured laborers and uncovered many blocks. He went back to England, bought a Greek grammar and learned the language; he read history and studied ancient art to explain his stones; he interested Gibson the sculptor; he invoked the assistance of the English Government; he called in the succor of Sir Humphry Davy to analyze the pigments; of experts in coins, of scholars and connoisseurs; and at last in his third visit brought home to England such statues and marble reliefs and such careful plans that he was able to reconstruct, in the British Museum, where it now stands, the perfect model of the Ionic trophy-monument, fifty years older than the Parthenon of Athens, and which had been destroyed by earthquakes, then by iconoclast Christians, then by savage Turks. But mark that in the task he had achieved an excellent education, and become associated with distinguished scholars whom he had interested in his pursuit; in short, had formed a college for himself; the enthusiast had found the master, the masters, whom he sought. Always genius seeks genius, desires nothing so much as to be a pupil and to find those who can lend it aid to perfect itself.[1]

Nor are the two elements, enthusiasm and drill, incompatible. Accuracy is essential to beauty. The very definition of the intellect is Aristotle's: "that by which we know terms or boundaries." Give a boy accurate perceptions. Teach him the difference between the similar and the same. Make him call things by their right names. Pardon in him no blunder. Then he will give you solid satisfaction as long as he lives.' It is better to teach the child arithmetic and Latin grammar than rhetoric or moral philosophy, because they require exactitude of performance; it is made certain that the lesson is mastered, and that power of performance is worth more than the knowledge. He can learn anything which is important to him now that the power to learn is secured: as mechanics say, when one has learned the use of tools, it is easy to work at a new craft.

Letter by letter, syllable by syllable, the child learns to read, and in good time can convey to all the domestic circle the sense of Shakspeare. By many steps each just as short, the stammering boy and the hesitating collegian, in the school debate, in college clubs, in mock court, comes at last to full, secure, triumphant unfolding of his thought in the popular assembly, with a

fulness of power that makes all the steps forgotten.

But this function of opening and feeding the human mind is not to be fulfilled by any mechanical or military method; is not to be trusted to any skill less large than Nature itself. You must not neglect the form, but you must secure the essentials. It is curious how perverse and intermeddling we are, and what vast pains and cost we incur to do wrong. Whilst we all know in our own experience and apply natural methods in our own business, — in education our common sense fails us, and we are continually trying costly machinery against nature, in patent schools and academies and in great colleges and universities.

The natural method forever confutes our experiments, and we must still come back to it. The whole theory of the school is on the nurse's or mother's knee. The child is as hot to learn as the mother is to impart. There is mutual delight. The joy of our childhood in hearing beautiful stories from some skilful aunt who loves to tell them, must be repeated in youth. The boy wishes to learn to skate, to coast, to catch a fish in the brook, to hit a mark with a snowball or a stone; and a boy a little older is

just as well pleased to teach him these sciences. Not less delightful is the mutual pleasure of teaching and learning the secret of algebra, or of chemistry, or of good reading and good recitation of poetry or of prose, or of chosen facts in history or in biography.

Nature provided for the communication of thought, by planting with it in the receiving mind a fury to impart it. 'T is so in every art, in every science. One burns to tell the new fact, the other burns to hear it. See how far a young doctor will ride or walk to witness a new surgical operation. I have seen a carriage-maker's shop emptied of all its workmen into the street, to scrutinize a new pattern from New York. So in literature, the young man who has taste for poetry, for fine images, for noble thoughts, is insatiable for this nourishment, and forgets all the world for the more learned friend, — who finds equal joy in dealing out his treasures.

Happy the natural college thus self-instituted around every natural teacher; the young men of Athens around Socrates; of Alexandria around Plotinus; of Paris around Abelard; of Germany around Fichte, or Niebuhr, or Goethe: in short the natural sphere of every leading mind. But

the moment this is organized, difficulties begin. The college was to be the nurse and home of genius; but, though every young man is born with some determination in his nature, and is a potential genius; is at last to be one; it is, in the most, obstructed and delayed, and, whatever they may hereafter be, their senses are now opened in advance of their minds. They are more sensual than intellectual. Appetite and indolence they have, but no enthusiasm. These come in numbers to the college: few geniuses: and the teaching comes to be arranged for these many, and not for those few. Hence the instruction seems to require skilful tutors, of accurate and systematic mind, rather than ardent and inventive masters. Besides, the youth of genius are eccentric, won't drill, are irritable, uncertain, explosive, solitary, not men of the world, not good for every-day association. You have to work for large classes instead of individuals; you must lower your flag and reef your sails to wait for the dull sailors; you grow departmental, routinary, military almost with your discipline and college police. But what doth such a school to form a great and heroic character? What abiding Hope can it inspire? What Reformer will it nurse? What poet will it breed

to sing to the human race? What discoverer of Nature's laws will it prompt to enrich us by disclosing in the mind the statute which all matter must obey? What fiery soul will it send out to warm a nation with his charity? What tranquil mind will it have fortified to walk with meekness in private and obscure duties, to wait and to suffer? Is it not manifest that our academic institutions should have a wider scope; that they should not be timid and keep the ruts of the last generation, but that wise men thinking for themselves and heartily seeking the good of mankind, and counting the cost of innovation, should dare to arouse the young to a just and heroic life; that the moral nature should be addressed in the school-room, and children should be treated as the high-born candidates of truth and virtue?

So to regard the young child, the young man, requires, no doubt, rare patience: a patience that nothing but faith in the remedial forces of the soul can give. You see his sensualism; you see his want of those tastes and perceptions which make the power and safety of your character. Very likely. But he has something else. If he has his own vice, he has its correlative virtue. Every mind should be allowed to make

its own statement in action, and its balance will appear. In these judgments one needs that foresight which was attributed to an eminent reformer, of whom it was said "his patience could see in the bud of the aloe the blossom at the end of a hundred years." Alas for the cripple Practice when it seeks to come up with the bird Theory, which flies before it. Try your design on the best school. The scholars are of all ages and temperaments and capacities. It is difficult to class them, some are too young, some are slow, some perverse. Each requires so much consideration, that the morning hope of the teacher, of a day of love and progress, is often closed at evening by despair. Each single case, the more it is considered, shows more to be done; and the strict conditions of the hours, on one side, and the number of tasks, on the other. Whatever becomes of our method, the conditions stand fast, — six hours, and thirty, fifty, or a hundred and fifty pupils. Something must be done, and done speedily, and in this distress the wisest are tempted to adopt violent means, to proclaim martial law, corporal punishment, mechanical arrangement, bribes, spies, wrath, main strength and ignorance, in lieu of that wise genial providential influence they had hoped,

and yet hope at some future day to adopt. Of course the devotion to details reacts injuriously on the teacher. He cannot indulge his genius, he cannot delight in personal relations with young friends, when his eye is always on the clock, and twenty classes are to be dealt with before the day is done. Besides, how can he please himself with genius, and foster modest virtue? A sure proportion of rogue and dunce finds its way into every school and requires a cruel share of time, and the gentle teacher, who wished to be a Providence to youth, is grown a martinet, sore with suspicions; knows as much vice as the judge of a police court, and his love of learning is lost in the routine of grammars and books of elements.'

A rule is so easy that it does not need a man to apply it; an automaton, a machine, can be made to keep a school so. It facilitates labor and thought so much that there is always the temptation in large schools to omit the endless task of meeting the wants of each single mind, and to govern by steam. But it is at frightful cost. Our modes of Education aim to expedite, to save labor; to do for masses what cannot be done for masses, what must be done reverently, one by one: say rather, the whole world is

needed for the tuition of each pupil. The advantages of this system of emulation and display are so prompt and obvious, it is such a time-saver, it is so energetic on slow and on bad natures, and is of so easy application, needing no sage or poet, but any tutor or schoolmaster in his first term can apply it, — that it is not strange that this calomel of culture should be a popular medicine. On the other hand, total abstinence from this drug, and the adoption of simple discipline and the following of nature, involves at once immense claims on the time, the thoughts, on the life of the teacher. It requires time, use, insight, event, all the great lessons and assistances of God; and only to think of using it implies character and profoundness; to enter on this course of discipline is to be good and great. It is precisely analogous to the difference between the use of corporal punishment and the methods of love. It is so easy to bestow on a bad boy a blow, overpower him, and get obedience without words, that in this world of hurry and distraction, who can wait for the returns of reason and the conquest of self; in the uncertainty too whether that will ever come? And yet the familiar observation of the universal compensations might suggest

the fear that so summary a stop of a bad humor was more jeopardous than its continuance.

Now the correction of this quack practice is to import into Education the wisdom of life. Leave this military hurry and adopt the pace of Nature. Her secret is patience. Do you know how the naturalist learns all the secrets of the forest, of plants, of birds, of beasts, of reptiles, of fishes, of the rivers and the sea? When he goes into the woods the birds fly before him and he finds none; when he goes to the river-bank, the fish and the reptile swim away and leave him alone. His secret is patience; he sits down, and sits still; he is a statue; he is a log. These creatures have no value for their time, and he must put as low a rate on his. By dint of obstinate sitting still, reptile, fish, bird and beast, which all wish to return to their haunts, begin to return. He sits still; if they approach, he remains passive as the stone he sits upon. They lose their fear. They have curiosity too about him. By and by the curiosity masters the fear, and they come swimming, creeping and flying towards him; and as he is still immovable, they not only resume their haunts and their ordinary labors and manners, show themselves to him in their work-day trim, but also volunteer some

degree of advances towards fellowship and good understanding with a biped who behaves so civilly and well. Can you not baffle the impatience and passion of the child by your tranquillity? Can you not wait for him, as Nature and Providence do? Can you not keep for his mind and ways, for his secret, the same curiosity you give to the squirrel, snake, rabbit, and the sheldrake and the deer? He has a secret; wonderful methods in him; he is, — every child, — a new style of man; give him time and opportunity. Talk of Columbus and Newton! I tell you the child just born in yonder hovel is the beginning of a revolution as great as theirs. But you must have the believing and prophetic eye. Have the self-command you wish to inspire. Your teaching and discipline must have the reserve and taciturnity of Nature. Teach them to hold their tongues by holding your own. Say little; do not snarl; do not chide; but govern by the eye. See what they need, and that the right thing is done.

I confess myself utterly at a loss in suggesting particular reforms in our ways of teaching. No discretion that can be lodged with a school-committee, with the overseers or visitors of an academy, of a college, can at all avail to reach these

difficulties and perplexities, but they solve themselves when we leave institutions and address individuals. The will, the male power, organizes, imposes its own thought and wish on others, and makes that military eye which controls boys as it controls men; admirable in its results, a fortune to him who has it, and only dangerous when it leads the workman to overvalue and overuse it and precludes him from finer means. Sympathy, the female force, — which they must use who have not the first, — deficient in instant control and the breaking down of resistance, is more subtle and lasting and creative. I advise teachers to cherish mother-wit. I assume that you will keep the grammar, reading, writing and arithmetic in order; 't is easy and of course you will. But smuggle in a little contraband wit, fancy, imagination, thought. If you have a taste which you have suppressed because it is not shared by those about you, tell them that. Set this law up, whatever becomes of the rules of the school: they must not whisper, much less talk; but if one of the young people says a wise thing, greet it, and let all the children clap their hands. They shall have no book but schoolbooks in the room; but if one has brought in a Plutarch or Shakspeare or Don Quixote or

Goldsmith or any other good book, and understands what he reads, put him at once at the head of the class. Nobody shall be disorderly, or leave his desk without permission, but if a boy runs from his bench, or a girl, because the fire falls, or to check some injury that a little dastard is inflicting behind his desk on some helpless sufferer, take away the medal from the head of the class and give it on the instant to the brave rescuer. If a child happens to show that he knows any fact about astronomy, or plants, or birds, or rocks, or history, that interests him and you, hush all the classes and encourage him to tell it so that all may hear. Then you have made your school-room like the world. Of course you will insist on modesty in the children, and respect to their teachers, but if the boy stops you in your speech, cries out that you are wrong and sets you right, hug him!'

To whatsoever upright mind, to whatsoever beating heart I speak, to you it is committed to educate men. By simple living, by an illimitable soul, you inspire, you correct, you instruct, you raise, you embellish all. By your own act you teach the beholder how to do the practicable. According to the depth from which you draw your life, such is the depth not only of

your strenuous effort, but of your manners and presence.

The beautiful nature of the world has here blended your happiness with your power. Work straight on in absolute duty, and you lend an arm and an encouragement to all the youth of the universe. Consent yourself to be an organ of your highest thought, and lo! suddenly you put all men in your debt, and are the fountain of an energy that goes pulsing on with waves of benefit to the borders of society, to the circumference of things.

VI

THE SUPERLATIVE

When wrath and terror changed Jove's regal port
And the rash-leaping thunderbolt fell short.

For Art, for Music overthrilled,
The wine-cup shakes, the wine is spilled.

THE SUPERLATIVE

THE doctrine of temperance is one of many degrees. It is usually taught on a low platform, but one of great necessity, — that of meats and drinks, and its importance cannot be denied and hardly exaggerated. But it is a long way from the Maine Law to the heights of absolute self-command which respect the conservatism of the entire energies of the body, the mind, and the soul. I wish to point at some of its higher functions as it enters into mind and character.

There is a superlative temperament which has no medium range, but swiftly oscillates from the freezing to the boiling point, and which affects the manners of those who share it with a certain desperation. Their aspect is grimace. They go tearing, convulsed through life, — wailing, praying, exclaiming, swearing. We talk, sometimes, with people whose conversation would lead you to suppose that they had lived in a museum, where all the objects were monsters and extremes. Their good people are phœnixes; their naughty are like the prophet's figs. They use the superlative of grammar: "most perfect," "most exquisite," "most horrible." Like the French,

they are enchanted, they are desolate, because you have got or have not got a shoe-string or a wafer you happen to want, — not perceiving that superlatives are diminutives, and weaken; that the positive is the sinew of speech, the superlative the fat. If the talker lose a tooth, he thinks the universal thaw and dissolution of things has come. Controvert his opinion and he cries "Persecution!" and reckons himself with Saint Barnabas, who was sawn in two.

Especially we note this tendency to extremes in the pleasant excitement of horror-mongers. Is there something so delicious in disasters and pain? Bad news is always exaggerated, and we may challenge Providence to send a fact so tragical that we cannot contrive to make it a little worse in our gossip.

All this comes of poverty. We are unskilful definers. From want of skill to convey quality, we hope to move admiration by quantity. Language should aim to describe the fact. It is not enough to suggest it and magnify it. Sharper sight would indicate the true line. 'T is very wearisome, this straining talk, these experiences all exquisite, intense and tremendous, — "The best I ever saw;" "I never in my life!" One wishes these terms gazetted and forbidden. Every

favorite is not a cherub, nor every cat a griffin, nor each unpleasing person a dark, diabolical intriguer; nor agonies, excruciations nor ecstasies our daily bread.

Horace Walpole relates that in the expectation, current in London a century ago, of a great earthquake, some people provided themselves with dresses for the occasion. But one would not wear earthquake dresses or resurrection robes for a working jacket, nor make a codicil to his will whenever he goes out to ride; and the secrets of death, judgment and eternity are tedious when recurring as minute-guns. Thousands of people live and die who were never, on a single occasion, hungry or thirsty, or furious or terrified. The books say, "It made my hair stand on end!" Who, in our municipal life, ever had such an experience? Indeed, I believe that much of the rhetoric of terror, — "It froze my blood," "It made my knees knock," etc. — most men have realized only in dreams and nightmares.

Then there is an inverted superlative, or superlative contrary, which shivers, like Demophoön, in the sun: wants fan and parasol on the cold Friday; is tired by sleep; feeds on drugs and poisons; finds the rainbow a discoloration; hates birds and flowers.

The exaggeration of which I complain makes plain fact the more welcome and refreshing. It is curious that a face magnified in a concave mirror loses its expression. All this overstatement is needless. A little fact is worth a whole limbo of dreams, and I can well spare the exaggerations which appear to me screens to conceal ignorance. Among these glorifiers, the coldest stickler for names and dates and measures cannot lament his criticism and coldness of fancy. Think how much pains astronomers and opticians have taken to procure an achromatic lens. Discovery in the heavens has waited for it; discovery on the face of the earth not less. I hear without sympathy the complaint of young and ardent persons that they find life no region of romance, with no enchanter, no giant, no fairies, nor even muses. I am very much indebted to my eyes, and am content that they should see the real world, always geometrically finished without blur or halo. The more I am engaged with it, the more it suffices.

How impatient we are, in these northern latitudes, of looseness and intemperance in speech! Our measure of success is the moderation and low level of an individual's judgment. Doctor Channing's piety and wisdom had such weight

that, in Boston, the popular idea of religion was whatever this eminent divine held. But I remember that his best friend, a man of guarded lips, speaking of him in a circle of his admirers, said: "I have known him long, I have studied his character, and I believe him capable of virtue."[1] An eminent French journalist paid a high compliment to the Duke of Wellington, when his documents were published: "Here are twelve volumes of military dispatches, and the word *glory* is not found in them."

The English mind is arithmetical, values exactness, likes literal statement; stigmatizes any heat or hyperbole as Irish, French, Italian, and infers weakness and inconsequence of character in speakers who use it. It does not love the superlative but the positive degree. Our customary and mechanical existence is not favorable to flights; long nights and frost hold us pretty fast to realities. The people of English stock, in all countries, are a solid people, wearing good hats and shoes, and owners of land whose title-deeds are properly recorded. Their houses are of wood, and brick, and stone, not designed to reel in earthquakes, nor blow about through the air much in hurricanes, nor to be lost under sand-drifts, nor to be made bonfires of by whim-

sical viziers; but to stand as commodious, rentable tenements for a century or two. All our manner of life is on a secure and moderate pattern, such as can last. Violence and extravagance are, once for all, distasteful; competence, quiet, comfort, are the agreed welfare.

Ever a low style is best. "I judge by every man's truth of his degree of understanding," said Chesterfield. And I do not know any advantage more conspicuous which a man owes to his experience in markets and the Exchange, or politics, than the caution and accuracy he acquires in his report of facts. "Uncle Joel's news is always true," said a person to me with obvious satisfaction, and said it justly; for the old head, after deceiving and being deceived many times, thinks, "What's the use of having to unsay to-day what I said yesterday? I will not be responsible; I will not add an epithet. I will be as moderate as the fact, and will use the same expression, without color, which I received; and rather repeat it several times, word for word, than vary it ever so little."[1]

The first valuable power in a reasonable mind, one would say, was the power of plain statement, or the power to receive things as they befall, and to transfer the picture of them to another

mind unaltered. 'T is a good rule of rhetoric which Schlegel gives, — "In good prose, every word is underscored;" which, I suppose, means, Never italicize.

Spartans, stoics, heroes, saints and gods use a short and positive speech. They are never off their centres. As soon as they swell and paint and find truth not enough for them, softening of the brain has already begun.' It seems as if inflation were a disease incident to too much use of words, and the remedy lay in recourse to things. I am daily struck with the forcible understatement of people who have no literary habit. The low expression is strong and agreeable. The citizen dwells in delusions. His dress and draperies, house and stables, occupy him. The poor countryman, having no circumstance of carpets, coaches, dinners, wine and dancing in his head to confuse him, is able to look straight at you, without refraction or prismatic glories, and he sees whether you see straight also, or whether your head is addled by this mixture of wines.

The common people diminish: "a cold snap;" "it rains easy;" "good haying weather." When a farmer means to tell you that he is doing well with his farm, he says, "I don't work as hard

as I did, and I don't mean to." When he wishes to condemn any treatment of soils or of stock, he says, "It won't do any good." Under the Catskill Mountains the boy in the steamboat said, "Come up here, Tony; it looks pretty out-of-doors." The farmers in the region do not call particular summits, as Killington, Camel's Hump, Saddle-back, etc., mountains, but only "them 'ere rises," and reserve the word mountains for the range.

I once attended a dinner given to a great state functionary by functionaries, — men of law, state and trade. The guest was a great man in his own country and an honored diplomatist in this. His health was drunk with some acknowledgment of his distinguished services to both countries, and followed by nine cold hurrahs. There was the vicious superlative. Then the great official spoke and beat his breast, and declared that he should remember this honor to the latest moment of his existence. He was answered again by officials. Pity, thought I, they should lie so about their keen sensibility to the nine cold hurrahs and to the commonplace compliment of a dinner. Men of the world value truth, in proportion to their ability; not by its sacredness, but for its convenience. Of such,

especially of diplomatists, one has a right to expect wit and ingenuity to avoid the lie if they must comply with the form. Now, I had been present, a little before, in the country at a cattle-show dinner, which followed an agricultural discourse delivered by a farmer: the discourse, to say the truth, was bad; and one of our village fathers gave at the dinner this toast: "The orator of the day: his subject deserves the attention of every farmer." The caution of the toast did honor to our village father. I wish great lords and diplomatists had as much respect for truth.

But whilst thus everything recommends simplicity and temperance of action; the utmost directness, the positive degree, we mean thereby that "rightly to be great is not to stir without great argument." Whenever the true objects of action appear, they are to be heartily sought. Enthusiasm is the height of man; it is the passing from the human to the divine.

The superlative is as good as the positive, if it be alive. If man loves the conditioned, he also loves the unconditioned. We don't wish to sin on the other side, and to be purists, nor to check the invention of wit or the sally of humor. 'T is very different, this weak and

wearisome lie, from the stimulus to the fancy which is given by a romancing talker who does not mean to be exactly taken, — like the gallant skipper who complained to his owners that he had pumped the Atlantic Ocean three times through his ship on the passage, and 't was common to strike seals and porpoises in the hold. Or what was similarly asserted of the late Lord Jeffrey, at the Scottish bar, — an attentive auditor declaring on one occasion after an argument of three hours, that he had spoken the whole English language three times over in his speech.

The objection to unmeasured speech is its lie. All men like an impressive fact. The astronomer shows you in his telescope the nebula of Orion, that you may look on that which is esteemed the farthest-off land in visible nature. At the Bank of England they put a scrap of paper that is worth a million pounds sterling into the hands of the visitor to touch. Our travelling is a sort of search for the superlatives or summits of art, — much more the real wonders of power in the human form. The arithmetic of Newton, the memory of Magliabecchi or Mirandola,[1] the versatility of Julius Cæsar, the concentration of Bonaparte, the inspiration

of Shakspeare, are sure of commanding interest and awe in every company of men.

The superlative is the excess of expression. We are a garrulous, demonstrative kind of creatures, and cannot live without much outlet for all our sense and nonsense. And fit expression is so rare that mankind have a superstitious value for it, and it would seem the whole human race agree to value a man precisely in proportion to his power of expression; and to the most expressive man that has existed, namely, Shakspeare, they have awarded the highest place.

The expressors are the gods of the world, but the men whom these expressors revere are the solid, balanced, undemonstrative citizens, who make the reserved guard, the central sense, of the world. For the luminous object wastes itself by its shining, — is luminous because it is burning up; and if the powers are disposed for display, there is all the less left for use and creation. The talent sucks the substance of the man. Superlatives must be bought by too many positives. Gardens of roses must be stripped to make a few drops of otto. And these raptures of fire and frost, which indeed cleanse pedantry out of conversation and make the

speech salt and biting, would cost me the days of well-being which are now so cheap to me, yet so valued. I like no deep stakes. I am a coward at gambling. I will bask in the common sun a while longer.

Children and thoughtless people like exaggerated event and activity; like to run to a house on fire, to a fight, to an execution; like to talk of a marriage, of a bankruptcy, of a debt, of a crime. The wise man shuns all this. I knew a grave man who, being urged to go to a church where a clergyman was newly ordained, said "he liked him very well, but he would go when the interesting Sundays were over."

All rests at last on the simplicity of nature, or real being. Nothing is for the most part less esteemed. We are fond of dress, of ornament, of accomplishments, of talents, but distrustful of health, of soundness, of pure innocence. Yet Nature measures her greatness by what she can spare, by what remains when all superfluity and accessories are shorn off.

Nor is there in Nature itself any swell, any brag, any strain or shock, but a firm common sense through all her elephants and lions, through all her ducks and geese; a true proportion between her means and her performance.

Semper sibi similis.' You shall not catch her in any anomalies, nor swaggering into any monsters. In all the years that I have sat in town and forest, I never saw a winged dragon, a flying man, or a talking fish, but ever the strictest regard to rule, and an absence of all surprises. No; Nature encourages no looseness, pardons no errors; freezes punctually at 32°, boils punctually at 212°; crystallizes in water at one invariable angle, in diamond at one, in granite at one; and if you omit the smallest condition, the experiment will not succeed.[2] Her communication obeys the gospel rule, yea or nay. She never expatiates, never goes into the reasons. Plant beechmast and it comes up, or it does not come up. Sow grain, and it does not come up: put lime into the soil and try again, and this time she says yea. To every question an abstemious but absolute reply. The like staidness is in her dealings with us. Nature is always serious, — does not jest with us. Where we have begun in folly, we are brought quickly to plain dealing. Life could not be carried on except by fidelity and good earnest; and she brings the most heartless trifler to determined purpose presently. The men whom she admits to her confidence, the simple and great characters, are

uniformly marked by absence of pretension and by understatement. The old and the modern sages of clearest insight are plain men, who have held themselves hard to the poverty of Nature.[1]

The firmest and noblest ground on which people can live is truth; the real with the real; a ground on which nothing is assumed, but where they speak and think and do what they must, because they are so and not otherwise.[2]

But whilst the basis of character must be simplicity, the expression of character, it must be remembered, is, in great degree, a matter of climate. In the temperate climates there is a temperate speech, in torrid climates an ardent one. Whilst in Western nations the superlative in conversation is tedious and weak, and in character is a capital defect, Nature delights in showing us that in the East it is animated, it is pertinent, pleasing, poetic.[3] Whilst she appoints us to keep within the sharp boundaries of form as the condition of our strength, she creates in the East the uncontrollable yearning to escape from limitation into the vast and boundless; to use a freedom of fancy which plays with all the works of Nature, great or minute, galaxy or grain of dust, as toys and words of the mind; inculcates the tenet of a beatitude to be found in escape

from all organization and all personality, and makes ecstasy an institution.

Religion and poetry are all the civilization of the Arab. "The ground of Paradise," said Mohammed, "is extensive, and the plants of it are hallelujahs." Religion and poetry: the religion teaches an inexorable destiny; it distinguishes only two days in each man's history, the day of his lot, and the day of judgment. The religion runs into asceticism and fate.[1] The costume, the articles in which wealth is displayed, are in the same extremes. Thus the diamond and the pearl, which are only accidental and secondary in their use and value to us, are proper to the Oriental world. The diver dives a beggar, and rises with the price of a kingdom in his hand. A bag of sequins, a jewel, a balsam, a single horse, constitute an estate in countries where insecure institutions make every one desirous of concealable and convertible property. Shall I say, further, that the Orientals excel in costly arts, in the cutting of precious stones, in working in gold, in weaving on hand-looms costly stuffs from silk and wool, in spices, in dyes and drugs, henna, otto and camphor, and in the training of slaves, elephants and camels, — things which are the poetry and superlative of commerce.

On the other hand, — and it is a good illustration of the difference of genius, — the European nations, and, in general, all nations in proportion to their civilization, understand the manufacture of iron. One of the meters of the height to which any civility rose is the skill in the fabric of iron. Universally, the better gold, the worse man. The political economist defies us to show any gold-mine country that is traversed by good roads: or a shore where pearls are found on which good schools are erected. The European civility, or that of the positive degree, is established by coal-mines, by ventilation, by irrigation and every skill — in having water cheap and pure, by iron, by agriculture for bread-stuffs, and manufacture of coarse and family cloths. Our modern improvements have been in the invention of friction matches; of india-rubber shoes; of the famous two parallel bars of iron; then of the air-chamber of Watt, and of the judicious tubing of the engine, by Stephenson, in order to the construction of locomotives.[1]

Meantime, Nature, who loves crosses and mixtures, makes these two tendencies necessary each to the other, and delights to reinforce each peculiarity by imparting the other. The North-

ern genius finds itself singularly refreshed and stimulated by the breadth and luxuriance of Eastern imagery and modes of thinking, which go to check the pedantry of our inventions and the excess of our detail. There is no writing which has more electric power to unbind and animate the torpid intellect than the bold Eastern muse.

If it come back, however, to the question of final superiority, it is too plain that there is no question that the star of empire rolls West: that the warm sons of the Southeast have bent the neck under the yoke of the cold temperament and the exact understanding of the Northwestern races.[1]



Ezra Ripley, D.D.



VII

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ETHICS

These rules were writ in human heart
By Him who built the day;
The columns of the universe
Not firmer based than they.

Thou shalt not try
To plant thy shrivelled pedantry
On the shoulders of the sky.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ETHICS

SINCE the discovery of Oersted that galvanism and electricity and magnetism are only forms of one and the same force, and convertible each into the other, we have continually suggested to us a larger generalization: that each of the great departments of Nature — chemistry, vegetation, the animal life — exhibits the same laws on a different plane; that the intellectual and moral worlds are analogous to the material. There is a kind of latent omniscience not only in every man, but in every particle.' That convertibility we so admire in plants and animal structures, whereby the repairs and the ulterior uses are subserved, when one part is wounded or deficient, by another; this self-help and self-creation proceed from the same original power which works remotely in grandest and meanest structures by the same design, — works in a lobster or a mite-worm as a wise man would if imprisoned in that poor form. 'T is the effort of God, of the Supreme Intellect, in the extremest frontier of his universe.

As this unity exists in the organization of

it is true that men generally are marked by a decided predominance of one or of the other element.

In youth and in age we are moralists, and in mature life the moral element steadily rises in the regard of all reasonable men.

'T is a sort of proverbial dying speech of scholars (at least it is attributed to many) that which Anthony Wood reports of Nathaniel Carpenter, an Oxford Fellow. "It did repent him," he said, "that he had formerly so much courted the maid instead of the mistress" (meaning philosophy and mathematics to the neglect of divinity). This, in the language of our time, would be ethics.

And when I say that the world is made up of moral forces, these are not separate. All forces are found in Nature united with that which they move: heat is not separate, light is not massed aloof, nor electricity, nor gravity, but they are always in combination. And so moral powers; they are thirsts for action, and the more you accumulate, the more they mould and form.

It is in the stomach of plants that development begins,[1] and ends in the circles of the universe. 'T is a long scale from the gorilla to the gentleman — from the gorilla to Plato, Newton,

Shakspeare — to the sanctities of religion, the refinements of legislation, the summits of science, art and poetry. The beginnings are slow and infirm, but it is an always-accelerated march. The geologic world is chronicled by the growing ripeness of the strata from lower to higher, as it becomes the abode of more highly-organized plants and animals. The civil history of men might be traced by the successive meliorations as marked in higher moral generalizations; — virtue meaning physical courage, then chastity and temperance, then justice and love; — bargains of kings with peoples of certain rights to certain classes, then of rights to masses, — then at last came the day when, as the historians rightly tell, the nerves of the world were electrified by the proclamation that all men are born free and equal.

Every truth leads in another. The bud extrudes the old leaf, and every truth brings that which will supplant it. In the court of law the judge sits over the culprit, but in the court of life in the same hour the judge also stands as culprit before a true tribunal. Every judge is a culprit, every law an abuse. Montaigne kills off bigots as cowhage kills worms; but there is a higher muse there sitting where he durst not soar, of eye so keen that it can report of a realm

in which all the wit and learning of the Frenchman is no more than the cunning of a fox.

It is the same fact existing as sentiment and as will in the mind, which works in Nature as irresistible law, exerting influence over nations, intelligent beings, or down in the kingdoms of brute or of chemical atoms. Nature is a tropical swamp in sunshine, on whose purlieus we hear the song of summer birds, and see prismatic dewdrops — but her interiors are terrific, full of hydras and crocodiles. In the pre-adamite she bred valor only; by and by she gets on to man, and adds tenderness, and thus raises virtue piecemeal.

When we trace from the beginning, that ferocity has uses; only so are the conditions of the then world met, and these monsters are the scavengers, executioners, diggers, pioneers and fertilizers, destroying what is more destructive than they, and making better life possible. We see the steady aim of Benefit in view from the first. Melioration is the law. The cruelest foe is a masked benefactor. The wars which make history so dreary have served the cause of truth and virtue. There is always an instinctive sense of right, an obscure idea which animates either party and which in long periods vindicates itself at last. Thus a sublime confidence is fed at the

bottom of the heart that, in spite of appearances, in spite of malignity and blind self-interest living for the moment, an eternal, beneficent necessity is always bringing things right; and though we should fold our arms, — which we cannot do, for our duty requires us to be the very hands of this guiding sentiment, and work in the present moment, — the evils we suffer will at last end themselves through the incessant opposition of Nature to everything hurtful.

The excellence of men consists in the completeness with which the lower system is taken up into the higher — a process of much time and delicacy, but in which no point of the lower should be left untranslated; so that the warfare of beasts should be renewed in a finer field, for more excellent victories. Savage war gives place to that of Turenne and Wellington, which has limitations and a code. This war again gives place to the finer quarrel of property, where the victory is wealth and the defeat poverty.

The inevitabilities are always sapping every seeming prosperity built on a wrong. No matter how you seem to fatten on a crime, that can never be good for the bee which is bad for the hive. See how these things look in the page of history. Nations come and go, cities rise and

fall, all the instincts of man, good and bad, work, — and every wish, appetite and passion rushes into act and embodies itself in usages, protects itself with laws. Some of them are useful and universally acceptable, hinder none, help all, and these are honored and perpetuated. Others are noxious. Community of property is tried, as when a Tartar horde or an Indian tribe roam over a vast tract for pasturage or hunting; but it is found at last that some establishment of property, allowing each on some distinct terms to fence and cultivate a piece of land, is best for all.

"For my part," said Napoleon, "it is not the mystery of the incarnation which I discover in religion, but the mystery of social order, which associates with heaven that idea of equality which prevents the rich from destroying the poor." [1]

Shall I say then it were truer to see Necessity calm, beautiful, passionless, without a smile, covered with ensigns of woe, stretching her dark warp across the universe? These threads are Nature's pernicious elements, her deluges, miasma, disease, poison; her curdling cold, her hideous reptiles and worse men, cannibals, and the depravities of civilization; the secrets of the

prisons of tyranny, the slave and his master, the proud man's scorn, the orphan's tears, the vices of men, lust, cruelty and pitiless avarice. These make the gloomy warp of ages. Humanity sits at the dread loom and throws the shuttle and fills it with joyful rainbows, until the sable ground is flowered all over with a woof of human industry and wisdom, virtuous examples, symbols of useful and generous arts, with beauty and pure love, courage and the victories of the just and wise over malice and wrong.'

Nature is not so helpless but it can rid itself at last of every crime. An Eastern poet, in describing the golden age, said that God had made justice so dear to the heart of Nature that, if any injustice lurked anywhere under the sky, the blue vault would shrivel to a snake-skin and cast it out by spasms. But the spasms of Nature are years and centuries, and it will tax the faith of man to wait so long.

Man is always throwing his praise or blame on events, and does not see that he only is real, and the world his mirror and echo. He imputes the stroke to fortune, which in reality himself strikes. The student discovers one day that he lives in enchantment: the house, the works, the persons, the days, the weathers — all that he calls

Nature, all that he calls institutions, when once his mind is active are visions merely, wonderful allegories, significant pictures of the laws of the mind; and through this enchanted gallery he is led by unseen guides to read and learn the laws of Heaven. This discovery may come early, — sometimes in the nursery, to a rare child; later in the school, but oftener when the mind is more mature; and to multitudes of men wanting in mental activity it never comes — any more than poetry or art. But it ought to come; it belongs to the human intellect, and is an insight which we cannot spare.

The idea of right exists in the human mind, and lays itself out in the equilibrium of Nature, in the equalities and periods of our system, in the level of seas, in the action and reaction of forces. Nothing is allowed to exceed or absorb the rest; if it do, it is disease, and is quickly destroyed. It was an early discovery of the mind, — this beneficent rule. Strength enters just as much as the moral element prevails. The strength of the animal to eat and to be luxurious and to usurp is rudeness and imbecility. The law is: To each shall be rendered his own. As thou sowest, thou shalt reap. Smite, and thou shalt smart. Serve, and thou shalt be served.

If you love and serve men, you cannot, by any hiding or stratagem, escape the remuneration. Secret retributions are always restoring the level, when disturbed, of the Divine justice. It is impossible to tilt the beam. All the tyrants and proprietors and monopolists of the world in vain set their shoulders to heave the bar. Settles for evermore the ponderous equator to its line, and man and mote and star and sun must range with it, or be pulverized by the recoil.'

It is a doctrine of unspeakable comfort. He that plants his foot here passes at once out of the kingdom of illusions. Others may well suffer in the hideous picture of crime with which earth is filled and the life of society threatened, but the habit of respecting that great order which certainly contains and will dispose of our little system, will take all fear from the heart. It did itself create and distribute all that is created and distributed, and, trusting to its power, we cease to care for what it will certainly order well. To good men, as we call good men, this doctrine of Trust is an unsounded secret. They use the word, they have accepted the notion of a mechanical supervision of human life, by which that certain wonderful being whom they call God does take up their affairs where their intel-

ligence leaves them, and somehow knits and co-ordinates the issues of them in all that is beyond the reach of private faculty. They do not see that *He*, that *It*, is there, next and within; the thought of the thought; the affair of affairs; that he is existence, and take him from them and they would not be. They do not see that particulars are sacred to him, as well as the scope and outline; that these passages of daily life are his work; that in the moment when they desist from interference, these particulars take sweetness and grandeur, and become the language of mighty principles.'

A man should be a guest in his own house, and a guest in his own thought. He is there to speak for truth; but who is he? Some clod the truth has snatched from the ground, and with fire has fashioned to a momentary man. Without the truth, he is a clod again. Let him find his superiority in not wishing superiority; find the riches of love which possesses that which it adores; the riches of poverty; the height of lowliness, the immensity of to-day; and, in the passing hour, the age of ages. Wondrous state of man! never so happy as when he has lost all private interests and regards, and exists only in obedience and love of the Author.

The fiery soul said: "Let me be a blot on this fair world, the obscurest, the loneliest sufferer, with one proviso, — that I know it is his agency. I will love him, though he shed frost and darkness on every way of mine." [1] The emphasis of that blessed doctrine lay in lowliness. The new saint gloried in infirmities. Who or what was he? His rise and his recovery were vicarious. He has fallen in another; he rises in another.

We perish, and perish gladly, if the law remains. I hope it is conceivable that a man may go to ruin gladly, if he see that thereby no shade falls on that he loves and adores.[2] We need not always be stipulating for our clean shirt and roast joint *per diem*. We do not believe the less in astronomy and vegetation, because we are writhing and roaring in our beds with rheumatism. Cripples and invalids, we doubt not there are bounding fawns in the forest, and lilies with graceful, springing stem; so neither do we doubt or fail to love the eternal law, of which we are such shabby practisers. Truth gathers itself spotless and unhurt after all our surrenders and concealments and partisanship — never hurt by the treachery or ruin of its best defenders, whether Luther, or William Penn, or Saint Paul. We

answer, when they tell us of the bad behavior of Luther or Paul: "Well, what if he did? Who was more pained than Luther or Paul?" Shall we attach ourselves violently to our teachers and historical personalities, and think the foundation shaken if any fault is shown in their record? But how is the truth hurt by their falling from it? The law of gravity is not hurt by every accident, though our leg be broken. No more is the law of justice by our departure from it.

We are to know that we are never without a pilot. When we know not how to steer, and dare not hoist a sail, we can drift. The current knows the way, though we do not. When the stars and sun appear, when we have conversed with navigators who know the coast, we may begin to put out an oar and trim a sail. The ship of heaven guides itself, and will not accept a wooden rudder.[1]

Have you said to yourself ever: 'I abdicate all choice, I see it is not for me to interfere. I see that I have been one of the crowd; that I have been a pitiful person, because I have wished to be my own master, and to dress and order my whole way and system of living. I thought I managed it very well. I see that my neighbors think so. I have heard prayers, I have prayed

even, but I have never until now dreamed that this undertaking the entire management of my own affairs was not commendable. I have never seen, until now, that it dwarfed me. I have not discovered, until this blessed ray flashed just now through my soul, that there dwelt any power in Nature that would relieve me of my load. But now I see.'

What is this intoxicating sentiment that allies this scrap of dust to the whole of Nature and the whole of Fate, — that makes this doll a dweller in ages, mocker at time, able to spurn all outward advantages, peer and master of the elements? I am taught by it that what touches any thread in the vast web of being touches me. I am representative of the whole; and the good of the whole, or what I call the right, makes me invulnerable.

How came this creation so magically woven that nothing can do me mischief but myself,— that an invisible fence surrounds my being which screens me from all harm that I will to resist? If I will stand upright, the creation cannot bend me. But if I violate myself, if I commit a crime, the lightning loiters by the speed of retribution, and every act is not hereafter but instantaneously rewarded according to its quality. Virtue is the

adopting of this dictate of the universal mind by the individual will. Character is the habit of this obedience, and Religion is the accompanying emotion, the emotion of reverence which the presence of the universal mind ever excites in the individual.

We go to famous books for our examples of character, just as we send to England for shrubs which grow as well in our own door-yards and cow-pastures. Life is always rich, and spontaneous graces and forces elevate it in every domestic circle, which are overlooked while we are reading something less excellent in old authors. From the obscurity and casualty of those which I know, I infer the obscurity and casualty of the like balm and consolation and immortality in a thousand homes which I do not know, all round the world. And I see not why to these simple instincts, simple yet grand, all the heights and transcendencies of virtue and of enthusiasm are not open. There is power enough in them to move the world; and it is not any sterility or defect in ethics, but our negligence of these fine monitors, of these world-embracing sentiments, that makes religion cold and life low.

While the immense energy of the sentiment of duty and the awe of the supernatural exert

incomparable influence on the mind, — yet it is often perverted, and the tradition received with awe, but without correspondent action of the receiver. Then you find so many men infatuated on that topic! Wise on all other, they lose their head the moment they talk of religion. It is the sturdiest prejudice in the public mind that religion is something by itself; a department distinct from all other experiences, and to which the tests and judgment men are ready enough to show on other things, do not apply. You may sometimes talk with the gravest and best citizen, and the moment the topic of religion is broached, he runs into a childish superstition. His face looks infatuated, and his conversation is. When I talked with an ardent missionary, and pointed out to him that his creed found no support in my experience, he replied, "It is not so in your experience, but is so in the other world." I answer: Other world! there is no other world. God is one and omnipresent; here or nowhere is the whole fact. The one miracle which God works evermore is in Nature, and imparting himself to the mind. When we ask simply, 'What is true in thought? what is just in action?' it is the yielding of the private heart to the Divine mind, and all

personal preferences, and all requiring of wonders, are profane.

The word miracle, as it is used, only indicates the ignorance of the devotee, staring with wonder to see water turned into wine, and heedless of the stupendous fact of his own personality. Here he stands, a lonely thought harmoniously organized into correspondence with the universe of mind and matter. What narrative of wonders coming down from a thousand years ought to charm his attention like this?' Certainly it is human to value a general consent, a fraternity of believers, a crowded church ; but as the sentiment purifies and rises, it leaves crowds. It makes churches of two, churches of one. A fatal disservice does this Swedenborg or other who offers to do my thinking for me. It seems as if, when the Spirit of God speaks so plainly to each soul, it were an impiety to be listening to one or another saint. Jesus was better than others, because he refused to listen to others and listened at home.

You are really interested in your thought. You have meditated in silent wonder on your existence in this world. You have perceived in the first fact of your conscious life here a miracle so astounding, — a miracle comprehending all

the universe of miracles to which your intelligent life gives you access, — as to exhaust wonder, and leave you no need of hunting here or there for any particular exhibitions of power. Then up comes a man with a text of 1 John v. 7, or a knotty sentence from St. Paul, which he considers as the axe at the root of your tree. You cannot bring yourself to care for it. You say: 'Cut away; my tree is Ygdrasil — the tree of life.'' He interrupts for the moment your peaceful trust in the Divine Providence. Let him know by your security that your conviction is clear and sufficient, and if he were Paul himself, you also are here, and with your Creator.

We all give way to superstitions. The house in which we were born is not quite mere timber and stone; is still haunted by parents and progenitors. The creeds into which we were initiated in childhood and youth no longer hold their old place in the minds of thoughtful men, but they are not nothing to us, and we hate to have them treated with contempt. There is so much that we do not know, that we give to these suggestions the benefit of the doubt.

It is a necessity of the human mind that he who looks at one object should look away from

all other objects. He may throw himself upon some sharp statement of one fact, some verbal creed, with such concentration as to hide the universe from him: but the stars roll above; the sun warms him. With patience and fidelity to truth he may work his way through, if only by coming against somebody who believes more fables than he does; and in trying to dispel the illusions of his neighbor, he opens his own eyes.

In the Christianity of this country there is wide difference of opinion in regard to inspiration, prophecy, miracles, the future state of the soul; every variety of opinion, and rapid revolution in opinions, in the last half century. It is simply impossible to read the old history of the first century as it was read in the ninth; to do so you must abolish in your mind the lessons of all the centuries from the ninth to the nineteenth.

Shall I make the mistake of baptizing the daylight, and time, and space, by the name of John or Joshua, in whose tent I chance to behold daylight, and space, and time? What anthropomorphists we are in this, that we cannot let moral distinctions be, but must mould them into human shape! "Mere morality" means — not

put into a personal master of morals.' Our religion is geographical, belongs to our time and place; respects and mythologizes some one time and place and person and people. So it is occasional. It visits us only on some exceptional and ceremonial occasion, on a wedding or a baptism, on a sick-bed, or at a funeral, or perhaps on a sublime national victory or a peace. But that, be sure, is not the religion of the universal, unsleeping providence, which lurks in trifles, in still, small voices, in the secrets of the heart and our closest thoughts, as efficiently as in our proclamations and successes.

Far be it from me to underrate the men or the churches that have fixed the hearts of men and organized their devout impulses or oracles into good institutions. The Church of Rome had its saints, and inspired the conscience of Europe — St. Augustine, and Thomas à Kempis, and Fénelon; the piety of the English Church in Cranmer, and Herbert, and Taylor; the Reformed Church, Scougal; the mystics, Behmen and Swedenborg; the Quakers, Fox and James Naylor. I confess our later generation appears ungirt, frivolous, compared with the religions of the last or Calvinistic age. There was in the last century a serious habitual reference to the

spiritual world, running through diaries, letters and conversation — yes, and into wills and legal instruments also, compared with which our liberation looks a little foppish and dapper.

The religion of seventy years ago was an iron belt to the mind, giving it concentration and force. A rude people were kept respectable by the determination of thought on the eternal world. Now men fall abroad, — want polarity, — suffer in character and intellect. A sleep creeps over the great functions of man. Enthusiasm goes out. In its stead a low prudence seeks to hold society stanch, but its arms are too short, cordage and machinery never supply the place of life.

Luther would cut his hand off sooner than write theses against the pope if he suspected that he was bringing on with all his might the pale negations of Boston Unitarianism.[1] I will not now go into the metaphysics of that reaction by which in history a period of belief is followed by an age of criticism, in which wit takes the place of faith in the leading spirits, and an excessive respect for forms out of which the heart has departed becomes more obvious in the least religious minds. I will not now explore the causes of the result, but the fact must be conceded as

of frequent recurrence, and never more evident than in our American church. To a self-denying, ardent church, delighting in rites and ordinances, has succeeded a cold, intellectual race, who analyze the prayer and psalm of their forefathers, and the more intellectual reject every yoke of authority and custom with a petulance unprecedented. It is a sort of mark of probity and sincerity to declare how little you believe, while the mass of the community indolently follow the old forms with childish scrupulosity, and we have punctuality for faith, and good taste for character.

But I hope the defect of faith with us is only apparent. We shall find that freedom has its own guards, and, as soon as in the vulgar it runs to license, sets all reasonable men on exploring those guards. I do not think the summit of this age truly reached or expressed unless it attain the height which religion and philosophy reached in any former age. If I miss the inspiration of the saints of Calvinism, or of Platonism, or Buddhism, our times are not up to theirs, or, more truly, have not yet their own legitimate force.

Worship is the regard for what is above us. Men are respectable only as they respect. We delight in children because of that religious eye which belongs to them; because of their rever-

ence for their seniors, and for their objects of belief. The poor Irish laborer one sees with respect, because he believes in something, in his church, and in his employers. Superstitious persons we see with respect, because their whole existence is not bounded by their hats and their shoes, but they walk attended by pictures of the imagination, to which they pay homage. You cannot impoverish man by taking away these objects above him without ruin. It is very sad to see men who think their goodness made of themselves; it is very grateful to see those who hold an opinion the reverse of this.'

All ages of belief have been great; all of unbelief have been mean. The Orientals believe in Fate. That which shall befall them is written on the iron leaf; they will not turn on their heel to avoid famine, plague or the sword of the enemy. That is great, and gives a great air to the people. We in America are charged with a great deficiency in worship; that reverence does not belong to our character; that our institutions, our politics and our trade have fostered a self-reliance which is small, liliputian, full of fuss and bustle; we look at and will bear nothing above us in the state, and do exceedingly applaud and admire ourselves, and believe in our senses and

understandings, while our imagination and our moral sentiment are desolated. In religion too we want objects above; we are fast losing or have already lost our old reverence; new views of inspiration, of miracles, of the saints, have supplanted the old opinions, and it is vain to bring them again. Revolutions never go backward, and in all churches a certain decay of ancient piety is lamented, and all threatens to lapse into apathy and indifferentism. It becomes us to consider whether we cannot have a real faith and real objects in lieu of these false ones. The human mind, when it is trusted, is never false to itself. If there be sincerity and good meaning — if there be really in us the wish to seek for our superiors, for that which is lawfully above us, we shall not long look in vain.

Meantime there is great centrality, a centripetence equal to the centrifugence. The mystic or theist is never scared by any startling materialism. He knows the laws of gravitation and of repulsion are deaf to French talkers, be they never so witty. If theology shows that opinions are fast changing, it is not so with the convictions of men with regard to conduct. These remain. The most daring heroism, the most accomplished culture, or rapt holiness, never

exhausted the claim of these lowly duties, — never penetrated to their origin, or was able to look behind their source. We cannot disenchant, we cannot impoverish ourselves, by obedience; but by humility we rise, by obedience we command, by poverty we are rich, by dying we live.

We are thrown back on rectitude forever and ever, only rectitude, — to mend one; that is all we can do. But *that* the zealot stigmatizes as a sterile chimney-corner philosophy. Now the first position I make is that natural religion supplies still all the facts which are disguised under the dogma of popular creeds. The progress of religion is steadily to its identity with morals.

How is the new generation to be edified? How should it not? The life of those once omnipotent traditions was really not in the legend, but in the moral sentiment and the metaphysical fact which the legends enclosed — and these survive. A new Socrates, or Zeno, or Swedenborg, or Pascal, or a new crop of geniuses like those of the Elizabethan age, may be born in this age, and, with happy heart and a bias for theism, bring asceticism, duty and magnanimity into vogue again.

It is true that Stoicism, always attractive to the intellectual and cultivated, has now no temples, no academy, no commanding Zeno or Antoninus. It accuses us that it has none: that pure ethics is not now formulated and concreted into a *cultus*, a fraternity with assemblings and holy-days, with song and book, with brick and stone. Why have not those who believe in it and love it left all for this, and dedicated themselves to write out its scientific scriptures to become its Vulgate for millions? I answer for one that the inspirations we catch of this law are not continuous and technical, but joyful sparkles, and are recorded for their beauty, for the delight they give, not for their obligation; and that is their priceless good to men, that they charm and uplift, not that they are imposed. It has not yet its first hymn. But, that every line and word may be coals of true fire, ages must roll, ere these casual wide-falling cinders can be gathered into broad and steady altar-flame.

It does not yet appear what forms the religious feeling will take. It prepares to rise out of all forms to an absolute justice and healthy perception. Here is now a new feeling of humanity infused into public action. Here is contribution of money on a more extended and

systematic scale than ever before to repair public disasters at a distance, and of political support to oppressed parties. Then there are the new conventions of social science, before which the questions of the rights of women, the laws of trade, the treatment of crime, regulation of labor, come for a hearing. If these are tokens of the steady currents of thought and will in these directions, one might well anticipate a new nation.

I know how delicate this principle is, — how difficult of adaptation to practical and social arrangements. It cannot be profaned; it cannot be forced; to draw it out of its natural current is to lose at once all its power. Such experiments as we recall are those in which some sect or dogma made the tie, and that was an artificial element, which chilled and checked the union. But is it quite impossible to believe that men should be drawn to each other by the simple respect which each man feels for another in whom he discovers absolute honesty; the respect he feels for one who thinks life is quite too coarse and frivolous, and that he should like to lift it a little, should like to be the friend of some man's virtue? for another who, underneath his compliances with artificial society, would

dearly like to serve somebody, — to test his own reality by making himself useful and indispensable?

Man does not live by bread alone, but by faith, by admiration, by sympathy. 'T is very shallow to say that cotton, or iron, or silver and gold are kings of the world; there are rulers that will at any moment make these forgotten. Fear will. Love will. Character will. Men live by their credence. Governments stand by it, — by the faith that the people share, — whether it comes from the religion in which they were bred, or from an original conscience in themselves, which the popular religion echoes. If government could only stand by force, if the instinct of the people was to resist the government, it is plain the government must be two to one in order to be secure, and then it would not be safe from desperate individuals. But no; the old commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," holds down New York, and London, and Paris, and not a police or horse-guards.

The credence of men it is that moulds them, and creates at will one or another surface. The mind as it opens transfers very fast its choice from the circumstance to the cause; from courtesy to love, from inventions to science, from

London or Washington law, or public opinion, to the self-revealing idea; from all that talent executes to the sentiment that fills the heart and dictates the future of nations. The commanding fact which I never do not see, is the sufficiency of the moral sentiment. We buttress it up, in shallow hours or ages, with legends, traditions and forms, each good for the one moment in which it was a happy type or symbol of the Power; but the Power sends in the next moment a new lesson, which we lose while our eyes are reverted and striving to perpetuate the old.

America shall introduce a pure religion. Ethics are thought not to satisfy affection. But all the religion we have is the ethics of one or another holy person; as soon as character appears, be sure love will, and veneration, and anecdotes and fables about him, and delight of good men and women in him. And what deeps of grandeur and beauty are known to us in ethical truth, what divination or insight belongs to it! For innocence is a wonderful electuary for purging the eyes to search the nature of those souls that pass before it. What armor it is to protect the good from outward or inward harm, and with what power it converts evil accidents into benefits; the power of its countenance; the power

of its presence! To it alone comes true friendship; to it come grandeur of situation and poetic perception, enriching all it deals with.[1]

Once men thought Spirit divine, and Matter diabolic; one Ormuzd, the other Ahriman. Now science and philosophy recognize the parallelism, the approximation, the unity of the two: how each reflects the other as face answers to face in a glass: nay, how the laws of both are one, or how one is the realization. We are learning not to fear truth.[2]

The man of this age must be matriculated in the university of sciences and tendencies flowing from all past periods. He must not be one who can be surprised and shipwrecked by every bold or subtile word which malignant and acute men may utter in his hearing, but should be taught all skepticisms and unbeliefs, and made the destroyer of all card-houses and paper walls, and the sifter of all opinions, by being put face to face from his infancy with Reality.

A man who has accustomed himself to look at all his circumstances as very mutable, to carry his possessions, his relations to persons, and even his opinions, in his hand, and in all these to pierce to the principle and moral law, and everywhere to find that, — has put himself out of the

reach of all skepticism ; and it seems as if whatever is most affecting and sublime in our intercourse, in our happiness, and in our losses, tended steadily to uplift us to a life so extraordinary, and, one might say, superhuman.

VIII

THE PREACHER

Ascending thorough just degrees
To a consummate holiness,
As angel blind to trespass done,
And bleaching all souls like the sun.

The true preacher can be known by this, that he deals out to the people his life, — life passed through the fire of thought.

THE PREACHER

IN the history of opinion, the pinch of falsehood shows itself first, not in argument and formal protest, but in insincerity, indifference and abandonment of the Church or the scientific or political or economic institution for other better or worse forms.

The venerable and beautiful traditions in which we were educated are losing their hold on human belief, day by day; a restlessness and dissatisfaction in the religious world marks that we are in a moment of transition; as when the Roman Church broke into Protestant and Catholic, or, earlier, when Paganism broke into Christians and Pagans. The old forms rattle, and the new delay to appear; material and industrial activity have materialized the age, and the mind, haughty with its sciences, disdains the religious forms as childish.

In consequence of this revolution in opinion, it appears, for the time, as the misfortune of this period that the cultivated mind has not the happiness and dignity of the religious sentiment. We are born too late for the old and too early for the new faith. I see in those classes and those

persons in whom I am accustomed to look for tendency and progress, for what is most positive and most rich in human nature, and who contain the activity of to-day and the assurance of to-morrow, — I see in them character, but skepticism; a clear enough perception of the inadequacy of the popular religious statement to the wants of their heart and intellect, and explicit declarations of this fact. They have insight and truthfulness; they will not mask their convictions; they hate cant; but more than this I do not readily find. The gracious motions of the soul, — piety, adoration, — I do not find. Scorn of hypocrisy, pride of personal character, elegance of taste and of manners and pursuit, a boundless ambition of the intellect, willingness to sacrifice personal interests for the integrity of the character, — all these they have; but that religious submission and abandonment which give man a new element and being, and make him sublime, — it is not in churches, it is not in houses. I see movement, I hear aspirations, but I see not how the great God prepares to satisfy the heart in the new order of things. No Church, no State emerges; and when we have extricated ourselves from all the embarrassments of the social problem, the oracle does not yet emit any light on the

mode of individual life. A thousand negatives it utters, clear and strong, on all sides; but the sacred affirmative it hides in the deepest abyss.

We do not see that heroic resolutions will save men from those tides which a most fatal moon heaps and levels in the moral, emotive and intellectual nature. It is certain that many dark hours, many imbecilities, periods of inactivity, — solstices when we make no progress, but stand still, — will occur. In those hours, we can find comfort in reverence of the highest power, and only in that. We never do quite nothing, or never need. It looks as if there were much doubt, much waiting, to be endured by the best. Perhaps there must be austere elections and determinations before any clear vision.

No age and no person is destitute of the sentiment, but in actual history its illustrious exhibitions are interrupted and periodical, — the ages of belief, of heroic action, of intellectual activity, of men cast in a higher mould.

But the sentiment that pervades a nation, the nation must react upon. It is resisted and corrupted by that obstinate tendency to personify and bring under the eyesight what should be the contemplation of Reason alone. The Understanding will write out the vision in a Confession

of Faith. Art will embody this vanishing Spirit in temples, pictures, sculptures and hymns. The senses instantly transfer the reverence from the vanishing Spirit to this steadfast form. Ignorance and passion alloy and degrade. In proportion to a man's want of goodness, it seems to him another and not himself; that is to say, the Deity becomes more objective, until finally flat idolatry prevails.

Of course the virtuous sentiment appears arrayed against the nominal religion, and the true men are hunted as unbelievers, and burned. Then the good sense of the people wakes up so far as to take tacit part with them, to cast off reverence for the Church; and there follows an age of unbelief.

This analysis was inevitable and useful. But the sober eye finds something ghastly in this empiricism. At first, delighted with the triumph of the intellect, the surprise of the results and the sense of power, we are like hunters on the scent and soldiers who rush to battle: but when the game is run down, when the enemy lies cold in his blood at our feet, we are alarmed at our solitude; we would gladly recall the life that so offended us; the face seems no longer that of an enemy.

I say the effect is withering; for, this examination resulting in the constant detection of errors, the flattered understanding assumes to judge all things, and to anticipate the same victories. In the activity of the understanding, the sentiments sleep. The understanding presumes in things above its sphere, and, because it has exposed errors in a church, concludes that a church is an error; because it has found absurdities to which the sentiment of veneration is attached, sneers at veneration; so that analysis has run to seed in unbelief. There is no faith left. We laugh and hiss, pleased with our power in making heaven and earth a howling wilderness.

Unlovely, nay, frightful, is the solitude of the soul which is without God in the world. To wander all day in the sunlight among the tribes of animals, unrelated to anything better; to behold the horse, cow and bird, and to foresee an equal and speedy end to him and them; — no, the bird, as it hurried by with its bold and perfect flight, would disclaim his sympathy and declare him an outcast. To see men pursuing in faith their varied action, warm-hearted, providing for their children, loving their friends, performing their promises, — what are they to this chill, houseless, fatherless, aimless Cain, the

man who hears only the sound of his own footsteps in God's resplendent creation? To him, it is no creation; to him, these fair creatures are hapless spectres: he knows not what to make of it. To him, heaven and earth have lost their beauty. How gloomy is the day, and upon yonder shining pond what melancholy light! I cannot keep the sun in heaven, if you take away the purpose that animates him. The ball, indeed, is there, but his power to cheer, to illuminate the heart as well as the atmosphere, is gone forever. It is a lamp-wick for meanest uses. The words, *great*, *venerable*, have lost their meaning; every thought loses all its depth and has become mere surface.'

But religion has an object. It does not grow thin or robust with the health of the votary. The object of adoration remains forever unhurt and identical. We are in transition, from the worship of the fathers which enshrined the law in a private and personal history, to a worship which recognizes the true eternity of the law, its presence to you and me, its equal energy in what is called brute nature as in what is called sacred. The next age will behold God in the ethical laws — as mankind begins to see them in this age, self-equal, self-executing, instan-

taneous and self-affirmed; needing no voucher, no prophet and no miracle besides their own irresistibility, — and will regard natural history, private fortunes and politics, not for themselves, as we have done, but as illustrations of those laws, of that beatitude and love. Nature is too thin a screen; the glory of the One breaks in everywhere.'

Every movement of religious opinion is of profound importance to politics and social life; and this of to-day has the best omens as being of the most expansive humanity, since it seeks to find in every nation and creed the imperishable doctrines. I find myself always struck and stimulated by a good anecdote, any trait of heroism, of faithful service. I do not find that the age or country makes the least difference; no, nor the language the actors spoke, nor the religion which they professed, whether Arab in the desert, or Frenchman in the Academy. I see that sensible men and conscientious men all over the world were of one religion, — the religion of well-doing and daring, men of sturdy truth, men of integrity and feeling for others.' My inference is that there is a statement of religion possible which makes all skepticism absurd.

The health and welfare of man consist in ascent from surfaces to solids; from occupation with details to knowledge of the design; from self-activity of talents, which lose their way by the lust of display, to the controlling and reinforcing of talents by the emanation of character. All that we call religion, all that saints and churches and Bibles from the beginning of the world have aimed at, is to suppress this impertinent surface-action, and animate man to central and entire action. The human race are afflicted with a St. Vitus's dance; their fingers and toes, their members, their senses, their talents, are superfluously active, while the torpid heart gives no oracle. When that wakes, it will revolutionize the world. Let that speak, and all these rebels will fly to their loyalty. Now every man defeats his own action, — professes this but practises the reverse; with one hand rows, and with the other backs water. A man acts not from one motive, but from many shifting fears and short motives; it is as if he were ten or twenty less men than himself, acting at discord with one another, so that the result of most lives is zero. But when he shall act from one motive, and all his faculties play true, it is clear mathematically, is it not, that this will tell

in the result as if twenty men had coöperated, — will give new senses, new wisdom of its own kind; that is, not more facts, nor new combinations, but divination, or direct intuition of the state of men and things?

The lessons of the moral sentiment are, once for all, an emancipation from that anxiety which takes the joy out of all life. It teaches a great peace. It comes itself from the highest place. It is that, which being in all sound natures, and strongest in the best and most gifted men, we know to be implanted by the Creator of Men. It is a commandment at every moment and in every condition of life to do the duty of that moment and to abstain from doing the wrong. And it is so near and inward and constitutional to each, that no commandment can compare with it in authority. All wise men regard it as the voice of the Creator himself.

I know there are those to whom the question of what shall be believed is the more interesting because they are to proclaim and teach what they believe.

All positive rules, ceremonial, ecclesiastical, distinctions of race or of person, are perishable; only those distinctions hold which are, in the nature of things, not matters of positive ordi-

nance. As the earth we stand upon is not imperishable, but is chemically resolvable into gases and nebulæ, so is the universe an infinite series of planes, each of which is a false bottom; and when we think our feet are planted now at last on adamant, the slide is drawn out from under us.

We must reconcile ourselves to the new order of things. But is it a calamity? The poet Wordsworth greeted even the steam-engine and railroads; and when they came into his poetic Westmoreland, bisecting every delightful valley, deforming every consecrated grove, yet manned himself to say, —

> "In spite of all that Beauty may disown
> In your harsh features, Nature doth embrace
> Her lawful offspring in man's art, and Time,
> Pleased with your triumphs o'er his brother Space,
> Accepts from your bold hands the proffered crown
> Of hope, and smiles on you with cheer sublime." [1]

And we can keep our religion, despite of the violent railroads of generalization, whether French or German, that block and intersect our old parish highways.

In matters of religion, men eagerly fasten their eyes on the differences between their creed and yours, whilst the charm of the study is in

finding the agreements and identities in all the religions of men. What is essential to the theologian is, that whilst he is select in his opinions, severe in his search for truth, he shall be broad in his sympathies, — not to allow himself to be excluded from any church. He is to claim for his own whatever eloquence of St. Chrysostom or St. Jerome or St. Bernard he has felt. So not less of Bishop Taylor or George Herbert or Henry Scougal. He sees that what is most effective in the writer is what is dear to his, the reader's, mind.'

Be not betrayed into undervaluing the churches which annoy you by their bigoted claims. They too were real churches. They answered to their times the same need as your rejection of them does to ours. The Catholic Church has been immensely rich in men and influences. Augustine, à Kempis, Fénelon, breathe the very spirit which now fires you. So with Cudworth, More, Bunyan. I agree with them more than I disagree. I agree with their heart and motive; my discontent is with their limitations and surface and language. Their statement is grown as fabulous as Dante's Inferno. Their purpose is as real as Dante's sentiment and hatred of vice. Always put the best interpretation on a tenet.

Why not on Christianity, wholesome, sweet and poetic? It is the record of a pure and holy soul, humble, absolutely disinterested, a truth-speaker and bent on serving, teaching and uplifting men. Christianity taught the capacity, the element, to love the All-perfect without a stingy bargain for personal happiness. It taught that to love him was happiness, — to love him in other's virtues.

An era in human history is the life of Jesus; and the immense influence for good leaves all the perversion and superstition almost harmless. Mankind have been subdued to the acceptance of his doctrine, and cannot spare the benefit of so pure a servant of truth and love.

Of course a hero so attractive to the hearts of millions drew the hypocrite and the ambitious into his train, and they used his name to falsify his history and undo his work. I fear that what is called religion, but is perhaps pew-holding, not obeys but conceals the moral sentiment. I put it to this simple test: Is a rich rogue made to feel his roguery among divines or literary men? No? Then 't is rogue again under the cassock. What sort of respect can these preachers or newspapers inspire by their weekly praises of texts and saints, when we know that they would say just the same things if Beelzebub had

written the chapter, provided it stood where it does in the public opinion?

Anything but unbelief, anything but losing hold of the moral intuitions, as betrayed in the clinging to a form of devotion or a theological dogma; as if it was the liturgy, or the chapel, that was sacred, and not justice and humility and the loving heart and serving hand.'

But besides the passion and interest which pervert, is the shallowness which impoverishes. The opinions of men lose all worth to him who perceives that they are accurately predictable from the ground of their sect. Nothing is more rare, in any man, than an act of his own. The clergy are as like as peas. I cannot tell them apart. It was said: They have bronchitis because they read from their papers sermons with a near voice, and then, looking at the congregation, they try to speak with their far voice, and the shock is noxious. I think they do this, or the converse of this, with their thought. They look into Plato, or into the mind, and then try to make parish mince-meat of the amplitudes and eternities, and the shock is noxious. It is the old story again: once we had wooden chalices and golden priests, now we have golden chalices and wooden priests.

The clergy are always in danger of becoming wards and pensioners of the so-called producing classes. Their first duty is self-possession founded on knowledge. The man of practice or worldly force requires of the preacher a talent, a force, like his own; the same as his own, but wholly applied to the priest's things. He does not forgive an application in the preacher to the merchant's things. He wishes him to be such a one as he himself should have been, had he been priest. He is sincere and ardent in his vocation, and plunged in it. Let priest or poet be as good in theirs.

The simple fact that the pulpit exists, that all over this country the people are waiting to hear a sermon on Sunday, assures that opportunity which is inestimable to young men, students of theology, for those large liberties. The existence of the Sunday, and the pulpit waiting for a weekly sermon, give him the very conditions, the πού στῶ he wants.[1] That must be filled, and he is armed to fill it. Let him value his talent as a door into Nature. Let him see his performances only as limitations. Then, over all, let him value the sensibility that receives, that loves, that dares, that affirms.

There are always plenty of young, ignorant

people, — though some of them are seven, and some of them seventy years old, — wanting peremptorily instruction; but in the usual averages of parishes, only one person that is qualified to give it. It is only that person who concerns me, — him only that I see. The others are very amiable and promising, but they are only neuters in the hive, — every one a possible royal bee, but not now significant. It does not signify what they say or think to-day; 't is the cry and the babble of the nursery, and their only virtue, docility. Buckminster, Channing, Dr. Lowell, Edward Taylor, Parker, Bushnell, Chapin, — it is they who have been necessary, and the opinions of the floating crowd of no importance whatever.

I do not love sensation preaching, — the personalities for spite, the hurrah for our side, the review of our appearances and what others say of us! That you may read in the gazette. We come to church properly for self-examination, for approach to principles to see how it stands with *us*, with the deep and dear facts of right and love. At the same time it is impossible to pay no regard to the day's events, to the public opinion of the times, to the stirring shouts of parties, to the calamities and prosperities of

our town and country; to war and peace, new events, great personages, to good harvests, new resources, to bankruptcies, famines and desolations. We are not stocks or stones, we are not thinking machines, but allied to men around us, as really though not quite so visibly as the Siamese brothers. And it were inhuman to affect ignorance or indifference on Sundays to what makes our blood beat and our countenance dejected Saturday or Monday. No, these are fair tests to try our doctrines by, and see if they are worth anything in life. The value of a principle is the number of things it will explain; and there is no good theory of disease which does not at once suggest a cure.[1]

Man proposes, but God disposes. We shall not very long have any part or lot in this earth, in whose affairs we so hotly mix, and where we feel and speak so energetically of our country and our cause. It is a comfort to reflect that the gigantic evils which seem to us so mischievous and so incurable will at last end themselves and rid the world of their presence, as all crime sooner or later must. But be that event for us soon or late, we are not excused from playing our short part in the best manner we can, no matter how insignificant our aid may be. Our

children will be here, if we are not; and their children's history will be colored by our action. But if we have no children, or if the events in which we have taken our part shall not see their solution until a distant future, there is yet a deeper fact; that as much justice as we can see and practise is useful to men, and imperative, whether we can see it to be useful or not.

The essential ground of a new book or a new sermon is a new spirit. The author has a new thought, sees the sweep of a more comprehensive tendency than others are aware of; falters never, but takes the victorious tone. For power is not so much shown in talent as in tone. And if I had to counsel a young preacher, I should say: When there is any difference felt between the foot-board of the pulpit and the floor of the parlor, you have not yet said that which you should say.'

Inspiration will have advance, affirmation, the forward foot, the ascending state; it will be an opener of doors; it will invent its own methods: the new wine will make the bottles new. Spirit is motive and ascending. Only let there be a deep observer, and he will make light of new shop and new circumstance that afflict you; new shop, or old cathedral, it is all one to him.

He will find the circumstance not altered, as deep a cloud of mystery on the cause, as dazzling a glory on the invincible law. Given the insight, and he will find as many beauties and heroes and strokes of genius close by him as Dante or Shakspeare beheld. A vivid thought brings the power to paint it; and in proportion to the depth of its source is the force of its projection. We are happy and enriched; we go away invigorated, assisted each in our own work, however different, and shall not forget to come again for new impulses.

The supposed embarrassments to young clergymen exist only to feeble wills. They need not consider them. The differences of opinion, the strength of old sects or timorous literalists, since it is not armed with prisons or fagots as in ruder times or countries, is not worth considering except as furnishing a needed stimulus. That gray deacon or respectable matron with Calvinistic antecedents, you can readily see, could not have presented any obstacle to the march of St. Bernard or of George Fox, of Luther or of Theodore Parker. And though I observe the deafness to counsel among men, yet the power of sympathy is always great; and affirmative discourse, presuming assent, will often

obtain it when argument would fail.' Such, too, is the active power of good temperament. Great sweetness of temper neutralizes such vast amounts of acid! As for position, the position is always the same, — insulting the timid, and not taken by storm, but flanked, I may say, by the resolute, simply by minding their own affair. Speak the affirmative; emphasize your choice by utter ignoring of all that you reject; seeing that opinions are temporary, but convictions uniform and eternal, — seeing that a sentiment never loses its pathos or its persuasion, but is youthful after a thousand years.'

The inevitable course of remark for us, when we meet each other for meditation on life and duty, is not so much the enjoining of this or that cure or burning out of our errors of practice, as simply the celebration of the power and beneficence amid which and by which we live, not critical, but affirmative.

All civil mankind have agreed in leaving one day for contemplation against six for practice. I hope that day will keep its honor and its use. A wise man advises that we should see to it that we read and speak two or three reasonable words, every day, amid the crowd of affairs and the noise of trifles. I should say boldly that we

should astonish every day by a beam out of eternity; retire a moment to the grand secret we carry in our bosom, of inspiration from heaven. But certainly on this seventh let us be the children of liberty, of reason, of hope; refresh the sentiment; think as spirits think, who belong to the universe, whilst our feet walk in the streets of a little town and our hands work in a small knot of affairs.[1] We shall find one result, I am sure, — a certain originality and a certain haughty liberty proceeding out of our retirement and self-communion, which streets can never give, infinitely removed from all vaporing and bravado, and which yet is more than a match for any physical resistance. It is true that which they say of our New England œstrum, which will never let us stand or sit, but drives us like mad through the world. The calmest and most protected life cannot save us. We want some intercalated days, to bethink us and to derive order to our life from the heart. That should be the use of the Sabbath, — to check this headlong racing and put us in possession of ourselves once more, for love or for shame.

The Sabbath changes its forms from age to age, but the substantial benefit endures. We no longer recite the old creeds of Athanasius or

Arius, of Calvin or Hopkins. The forms are flexible, but the uses not less real. The old heart remains as ever with its old human duties. The old intellect still lives, to pierce the shows to the core. Truth is simple, and will not be antique; is ever present, and insists on being of this age and of this moment. Here is thought and love and truth and duty, new as on the first day of Adam and of angels.

"There are two pairs of eyes in man; and it is requisite that the pair which are beneath should be closed when the pair that are above them perceive; and that when the pair above are closed, those which are beneath are opened." The lower eyes see only surfaces and effects, the upper eyes behold causes and the connection of things. And when we go alone, or come into the house of thought and worship, we come with purpose to be disabused of appearances, to see realities, the great lines of our destiny, to see that life has no caprice or fortune, is no hopping squib, but a growth after immutable laws under beneficent influences the most immense. The Church is open to great and small in all nations; and how rare and lofty, how unattainable, are the aims it labors to set before men! We come to educate, come to isolate, to be abstractionists;

in fine, to open the upper eyes to the deep mystery of cause and effect, to know that though ministers of justice and power fail, Justice and Power fail never. The open secret of the world is the art of subliming a private soul with inspirations from the great and public and divine Soul from which we live.'

IX

THE MAN OF LETTERS

On bravely through the sunshine and the showers,
Time hath his work to do, and we have ours.

THE MAN OF LETTERS

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE LITERARY SOCIETIES OF DARTMOUTH AND WATERVILLE COLLEGES, 1863.

GENTLEMEN of the Literary Societies: Some of you are to-day saying your farewells to each other, and to-morrow will receive the parting honors of the College. You go to be teachers, to become physicians, lawyers, divines; in due course, statesmen, naturalists, philanthropists; I hope, some of you, to be the men of letters, critics, philosophers; perhaps the rare gift of poetry already sparkles, and may yet burn. At all events, before the shadows of these times darken over your youthful sensibility and candor, let me use the occasion which your kind request gives me, to offer you some counsels which an old scholar may without pretension bring to youth, in regard to the career of letters, — the power and joy that belong to it, and its high office in evil times. I offer perpetual congratulation to the scholar; he has drawn the white lot in life. The very disadvantages of his condition point at superiorities. He is too good for the world; he is in advance of his race; his

function is prophetic. He belongs to a superior society, and is born one or two centuries too early for the rough and sensual population into which he is thrown. But the Heaven which sent him hither knew that well enough, and sent him as a leader to lead. Are men perplexed with evil times? The inviolate soul is in perpetual telegraphic communication with the source of events. He has earlier information, a private despatch which relieves him of the terror which presses on the rest of the community. He is a learner of the laws of Nature and the experiences of history; a prophet surrendered with self-abandoning sincerity to the Heaven which pours through him its will to mankind. This is the theory, but you know how far this is from the fact, that nothing has been able to resist the tide with which the material prosperity of America in years past has beat down the hope of youth, the piety of learning.' The country was full of activity, with its wheat, coal, iron, cotton; the wealth of the globe was here, too much work and not men enough to do it. Britain, France, Germany, Scandinavia sent millions of laborers; still the need was more. Every kind of skill was in demand, and the bribe came to men of intellectual culture, — Come, drudge in our mill.

America at large exhibited such a confusion as California showed in 1849, when the cry of gold was first raised. All the distinctions of profession and habit ended at the mines. All the world took off their coats and worked in shirt-sleeves. Lawyers went and came with pick and wheelbarrow; doctors of medicine turned teamsters; stray clergymen kept the bar in saloons; professors of colleges sold cigars, mince-pies, matches, and so on. It is the perpetual tendency of wealth to draw on the spiritual class, not in this coarse way, but in plausible and covert ways. It is charged that all vigorous nations, except our own, have balanced their labor by mental activity, and especially by the imagination, — the cardinal human power, the angel of earnest and believing ages. The subtle Hindoo, who carried religion to ecstasy and philosophy to idealism, produced the wonderful epics of which, in the present century, the translations have added new regions to thought. The Egyptian built Thebes and Karnak on a scale which dwarfs our art, and by the paintings on their interior walls invited us into the secret of the religious belief whence he drew such power. The Greek was so perfect in action and in imagination, his poems, from Homer to Euripides, so charm-

ing in form and so true to the human mind, that we cannot forget or outgrow their mythology.[1] The Hebrew nation compensated for the insignificance of its members and territory by its religious genius, its tenacious belief; its poems and histories cling to the soil of this globe like the primitive rocks. On the south and east shores of the Mediterranean Mahomet impressed his fierce genius how deeply into the manners, language and poetry of Arabia and Persia! See the activity of the imagination in the Crusades: the front of morn was full of fiery shapes; the chasm was bridged over; heaven walked on earth, and Earth could see with eyes the Paradise and the Inferno. Dramatic "mysteries" were the entertainment of the people. Parliaments of Love and Poesy served them, instead of the House of Commons, Congress and the newspapers. In Puritanism, how the whole Jewish history became flesh and blood in those men, let Bunyan show.[2] Now it is agreed that we are utilitarian; that we are skeptical, frivolous; that with universal cheap education we have stringent theology, but religion is low. There is much criticism, not on deep grounds, but an affirmative philosophy is wanting. Our profoundest philosophy (if it were not contradiction in terms)

is skepticism. The great poem of the age is the disagreeable poem of Faust, — of which the Festus of Bailey and the Paracelsus of Browning are English variations.[1] We have superficial sciences, restless, gossiping, aimless activity. We run to Paris, to London, to Rome, to Mesmerism, Spiritualism, to Pusey, to the Catholic Church, as if for the want of thought, and those who would check and guide have a dreary feeling that in the change and decay of the old creeds and motives there was no offset to supply their place. Our industrial skill, arts ministering to convenience and luxury, have made life expensive, and therefore greedy, careful, anxious; have turned the eyes downward to the earth, not upward to thought.

Ernest Renan finds that Europe has thrice assembled for exhibitions of industry, and not a poem graced the occasion; and nobody remarked the defect.[2] A French prophet of our age, Fourier, predicted that one day, instead of by battles and Œcumenical Councils, the rival portions of humanity would dispute each other's excellence in the manufacture of little cakes.

"In my youth," said a Scotch mountaineer, "a Highland gentleman measured his importance, by the number of men his domain could

support. After some time the question was, to know how many great cattle it would feed. To-day we are come to count the number of sheep. I suppose posterity will ask how many rats and mice it will feed."

Dickens complained that in America, as soon as he arrived in any of the Western towns, a committee waited on him and invited him to deliver a temperance lecture. Bowditch translated Laplace, and when he removed to Boston, the Hospital Life Assurance Company insisted that he should make their tables of annuities. Napoleon knows the art of war, but should not be put on picket duty. Linnæus or Robert Brown must not be set to raise gooseberries and cucumbers, though they be excellent botanists. A shrewd broker out of State Street visited a quiet countryman possessed of all the virtues, and in his glib talk said, " With your character now I could raise all this money at once, and make an excellent thing of it."

There is an oracle current in the world, that nations die by suicide. The sign of it is the decay of thought. Niebuhr has given striking examples of that fatal portent; as in the loss of power of thought that followed the disasters of the Athenians in Sicily.

I cannot forgive a scholar his homeless despondency. He represents intellectual or spiritual force. I wish him to rely on the spiritual arm; to live by his strength, not by his weakness. A scholar defending the cause of slavery, of arbitrary government, of monopoly, of the oppressor, is a traitor to his profession. He has ceased to be a scholar. He is not company for clean people.' The worst times only show him how independent he is of times; only relieve and bring out the splendor of his privilege. Disease alarms the family, but the physician sees in it a temporary mischief, which he can check and expel. The fears and agitations of men who watch the markets, the crops, the plenty or scarcity of money, or other superficial events, are not for him. He knows that the world is always equal to itself; that the forces which uphold and pervade it are eternal. Air, water, fire, iron, gold, wheat, electricity, animal fibre, have not lost a particle of power, and no decay has crept over the spiritual force which gives bias and period to boundless Nature. Bad times, — what are bad times? Nature is rich, exuberant, and mocks at the puny forces of destruction. Man makes no more impression on her wealth than the caterpillar or the cankerworm whose petty

ravage, though noticed in an orchard or a village, is insignificant in the vast exuberance of the summer. There is no unemployed force in Nature. All decomposition is recomposition. War disorganizes, but it is to reorganize. Weeks, months pass — a new harvest; trade springs up, and there stand new cities, new homes, all rebuilt and sleepy with permanence. Italy, France — a hundred times those countries have been trampled with armies and burned over: a few summers, and they smile with plenty and yield new men and new revenues.

If churches are effete, it is because the new Heaven forms. You are here as the carriers of the power of Nature, — as Roger Bacon, with his secret of gunpowder, with his secret of the balloon and of steam; as Copernicus, with his secret of the true astronomy; as Columbus, with America in his log-book; as Newton, with his gravity; Harvey, with his circulation; Smith, with his law of trade; Franklin, with lightning; Adams, with Independence; Kant, with pure reason; Swedenborg, with his spiritual world. You are the carriers of ideas which are to fashion the mind and so the history of this breathing world, so as they shall be, and not otherwise.[1]

Every man is a scholar potentially, and does

not need any one good so much as this of right thought.

"Calm pleasures here abide, majestic pains."[1]

Coleridge traces "three silent revolutions," of which the first was "when the clergy fell from the Church." A scholar was once a priest. But the Church clung to ritual, and the scholar clung to joy, low as well as high, and thus the separation was a mutual fault. But I think it is a schism which must be healed. The true scholar is the Church. Only the duties of Intellect must be owned. Down with these dapper trimmers and sycophants! let us have masculine and divine men, formidable lawgivers, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, who warp the churches of the world from their traditions, and penetrate them through and through with original perception. The intellectual man lives in perpetual victory. As certainly as water falls in rain on the tops of mountains and runs down into valleys, plains and pits, so does thought fall first on the best minds, and run down, from class to class, until it reaches the masses, and works revolutions.

Nature says to the American: "I understand mensuration and numbers; I compute the ellipse

of the moon, the ebb and flow of waters, the curve and the errors of planets, the balance of attraction and recoil. I have measured out to you by weight and tally the powers you need. I give you the land and sea, the forest and the mine, the elemental forces, nervous energy. When I add difficulty, I add brain. See to it that you hold and administer the continent for mankind. One thing you have rightly done. You have offered a patch of land in the wilderness to every son of Adam who will till it. Other things you have begun to do, — to strike off the chains which snuffling hypocrites had bound on the weaker race." [1] You are to imperil your lives and fortunes for a principle. The ambassador is held to maintain the dignity of the Republic which he represents. But what does the scholar represent? The organ of ideas, the subtle force which creates Nature and men and states; — consoler, upholder, imparting pulses of light and shocks of electricity, guidance and courage. So let his habits be formed, and all his economies heroic; no spoiled child, no drone, no epicure, but a stoic, formidable, athletic, knowing how to be poor, loving labor, and not flogging his youthful wit with tobacco and wine; treasuring his youth. I wish the

youth to be an armed and complete man; no helpless angel to be slapped in the face, but a man dipped in the Styx of human experience, and made invulnerable so,—self-helping. A redeeming trait of the Sophists of Athens, Hippias and Gorgias, is that they made their own clothes and shoes. Learn to harness a horse, to row a boat, to camp down in the woods, to cook your supper. I chanced lately to be at West Point, and, after attending the examination in scientific classes, I went into the barracks.' The chamber was in perfect order; the mattress on the iron camp-bed rolled up, as if ready for removal. I asked the first Cadet, "Who makes your bed?" "I do." "Who fetches your water?" "I do." "Who blacks your shoes?" "I do." It was so in every room. These are first steps to power. Learn of Samuel Johnson or David Hume, that it is a primary duty of the man of letters to secure his independence.

Stand by your order. 'T is some thirty years since the days of the Reform Bill in England, when on the walls in London you read everywhere placards, "Down with the Lords." At that time, Earl Grey, who was leader of Reform, was asked, in Parliament, his policy on the measures of the Radicals. He replied, "I shall stand

by my order." Where there is no vision, the people perish. The fault lies with the educated class, the men of study and thought. There is a very low feeling of duty: the merchant is true to the merchant, the noble in England and Europe stands by his order, the politician believes in his arts and combinations; but the scholar does not stand by his order, but defers to the men of this world.[1]

Gentlemen, I am here to commend to you your art and profession as thinkers. It is real. It is the secret of power. It is the art of command. All superiority is this, or related to this. "All that the world admires comes from within." Thought makes us men; ranks us; distributes society; distributes the work of the world; is the prolific source of all arts, of all wealth, of all delight, of all grandeur. Men are as they believe. Men are as they think, and the man who knows any truth not yet discerned by other men, is master of all other men so far as that truth and its wide relations are concerned.

Intellect measures itself by its counteraction to any accumulation of material force. There is no mass which it cannot surmount and dispose of. The exertions of this force are the eminent experiences, — out of a long life all that is worth

remembering. These are the moments that balance years. Does any one doubt between the strength of a thought and that of an institution? Does any one doubt that a good general is better than a park of artillery? See a political revolution dogging a book. See armies, institutions, literatures, appearing in the train of some wild Arabian's dream.

There is a proverb that Napoleon, when the Mameluke cavalry approached the French lines, ordered the grenadiers to the front, and the asses and the *savans* to fall into the hollow square. It made a good story, and circulated in that day. But how stands it now? The military expedition was a failure. Bonaparte himself deserted, and the army got home as it could, all fruitless; not a trace of it remains. All that is left of it is the researches of those *savans* on the antiquities of Egypt, including the great work of Denon, which led the way to all the subsequent studies of the English and German scholars on that foundation. Pytheas of Ægina was victor in the Pancratium of the boys, at the Isthmian games. He came to the poet Pindar and wished him to write an ode in his praise, and inquired what was the price of a poem. Pindar replied that he should give him one talent, about a thousand

dollars of our money. "A talent!" cried Pytheas; "why, for so much money I can erect a statue of bronze in the temple." "Very likely." On second thoughts, he returned and paid for the poem. And now not only all the statues of bronze in the temples of Ægina are destroyed, but the temples themselves, and the very walls of the city are utterly gone, whilst the ode of Pindar, in praise of Pytheas, remains entire.

The treachery of scholars! They are idealists, and should stand for freedom, justice, and public good. The scholar is bound to stand for all the virtues and all the liberties, — liberty of trade, liberty of the press, liberty of religion, — and he should open all the prizes of success and all the roads of Nature to free competition.

The country complains loudly of the inefficiency of the army. It was badly led. But, before this, it was not the army alone, it was the population that was badly led. The clerisy, the spiritual guides, the scholars, the seers have been false to their trust.[1]

Rely on yourself. There is respect due to your teachers, but every age is new, and has problems to solve, insoluble by the last age. Men over forty are no judges of a book written

in a new spirit. Neither your teachers, nor the universal teachers, the laws, the customs or dogmas of nations, neither saint nor sage, can compare with that counsel which is open to you. No, it is not nations, no, nor even masters, not at last a few individuals or any heroes, but himself only, the large equality to truth of a single mind, — as if, in the narrow walls of a human heart, the wide realm of truth, the world of morals, the tribunal by which the universe is judged, found room to exist.

Our people have this levity and complaisance, — they fear to offend, do not wish to be misunderstood; do not wish, of all things, to be in the minority. God and Nature are altogether sincere, and Art should be as sincere. It is not enough that the work should show a skilful hand, ingenious contrivance and admirable polish and finish; it should have a commanding motive in the time and condition in which it was made. We should see in it the great belief of the artist, which caused him to make it so as he did, and not otherwise; nothing frivolous, nothing that he might do or not do, as he chose, but somewhat that must be done then and there by him; he could not take his neck out of that yoke, and save his soul. And this design must shine

through the whole performance.' Sincerity is, in dangerous times, discovered to be an immeasurable advantage. I distrust all the legends of great accomplishments or performance of unprincipled men. Very little reliance must be put on the common stories that circulate of this great senator's or that great barrister's learning, their Greek, their varied literature. That ice won't bear. Reading! — do you mean that this senator or this lawyer, who stood by and allowed the passage of infamous laws, was a reader of Greek books? That is not the question; but to what purpose did they read? I allow them the merit of that reading which appears in their opinions, tastes, beliefs and practice. They read that they might know, did they not? Well, these men did not know. They blundered; they were utterly ignorant of that which every boy or girl of fifteen knows perfectly, — the rights of men and women. And this big-mouthed talker, among his dictionaries and Leipzig editions of Lysias, had lost his knowledge. But the President of the Bank nods to the President of the Insurance Office, and relates that at Virginia Springs this idol of the forum exhausted a trunkful of classic authors. There is always the previous question, How came you on that side? You are a very

elegant writer, but you can't write up what gravitates down.'

It is impossible to extricate oneself from the questions in which our age is involved. All of us have shared the new enthusiasm of country and of liberty which swept like a whirlwind through all souls at the outbreak of war, and brought, by ennobling us, an offset for its calamity.'

War, seeking for the roots of strength, comes upon the moral aspects at once. In quiet times, custom stifles this discussion as sentimental, and brings in the brazen devil, as by immemorial right. The war uplifted us into generous sentiments. War ennobles the age. We do not often have a moment of grandeur in these hurried, slipshod lives, but the behavior of the young men has taught us much. We will not again disparage America, now that we have seen what men it will bear. Battle, with the sword, has cut many a Gordian knot in twain which all the wit of East and West, of Northern and Border statesmen could not untie.

I learn with joy and with deep respect that this college has sent its full quota to the field. I learn with grief, but with honoring pain, that you have had your sufferers in the battle, and that the noble youth have returned wounded

and maimed. The times are dark, but heroic. The times develop the strength they need. Boys are heroes. Women have shown a tender patriotism and inexhaustible charity. And on each new threat of faction, the ballot of the people has been unexpectedly right. But the issues already appearing overpay the cost. Slavery is broken, and, if we use our advantage, irretrievably. For such a gain, to end once for all that pest of all our free institutions, one generation might well be sacrificed; perhaps it will; that this continent be purged and a new era of equal rights dawn on the universe. Who would not, if it could be made certain that the new morning of universal liberty should rise on our race by the perishing of one generation, — who would not consent to die?

X

THE SCHOLAR

For thought, and not praise,
Thought is the wages
For which I sell days,
Will gladly sell ages,
And willing grow old,
Deaf and dumb, blind and cold,
Melting matter into dreams,
Panoramas which I saw,
And whatever glows or seems
Into substance, into Law.

The sun and moon shall fall amain
Like sowers' seeds into his brain,
There quickened to be born again.

THE SCHOLAR

AN ORATION DELIVERED BEFORE THE WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON SOCIETIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, 28 JUNE, 1876.

GENTLEMEN: The Athenians took an oath, on a certain crisis in their affairs, to esteem wheat, the vine and the olive the bounds of Attica. The territory of scholars is yet larger. A stranger but yesterday to every person present, I find myself already at home, for the society of lettered men is a university which does not bound itself with the walls of one cloister or college, but gathers in the distant and solitary student into its strictest amity. Literary men gladly acknowledge these ties which find for the homeless and the stranger a welcome where least looked for. But in proportion as we are conversant with the laws of life, we have seen the like. We are used to these surprises. This is but one operation of a more general law. As in coming among strange faces we find that the love of letters makes us friends, so in strange thoughts, in the worldly habits which harden us, we find with some surprise that learning and truth and beauty have not let us go; that the spirit-

ual nature is too strong for us; that those excellent influences which men in all ages have called the *Muse*, or by some kindred name, come in to keep us warm and true; that the face of Nature remains irresistibly alluring. We have strayed from the territorial monuments of Attica, but here still are wheat and olives and the vine.

I do not now refer to that intellectual conscience which forms itself in tender natures, and gives us many twinges for our sloth and unfaithfulness: — the influence I speak of is of a higher strain. Stung by this intellectual conscience, we go to measure our tasks as scholars, and screw ourselves up to energy and fidelity, and our sadness is suddenly overshone by a sympathy of blessing. Beauty, the inspirer, the cheerful festal principle, the leader of gods and men, which draws by being beautiful, and not by considerations of advantage, comes in and puts a new face on the world.[1] I think the peculiar office of scholars in a careful and gloomy generation is to be (as the poets were called in the Middle Ages) Professors of the Joyous Science, detectors and delineators of occult symmetries and unpublished beauties; heralds of civility, nobility, learning and wisdom; affirmers of the one law,

yet as those who should affirm it in music and dancing;' expressors themselves of that firm and cheerful temper, infinitely removed from sadness, which reigns through the kingdoms of chemistry, vegetation and animal life. Every natural power exhilarates; a true talent delights the possessor first. A celebrated musician was wont to say, that men knew not how much more he delighted himself with his playing than he did others; for if they knew, his hearers would rather demand of him than give him a reward. The scholar is here to fill others with love and courage by confirming their trust in the love and wisdom which are at the heart of all things; to affirm noble sentiments; to hear them wherever spoken, out of the deeps of ages, out of the obscurities of barbarous life, and to republish them: — to untune nobody, but to draw all men after the truth, and to keep men spiritual and sweet.[2]

Language can hardly exaggerate the beatitude of the intellect flowing into the faculties. This is the power that makes the world incarnated in man, and laying again the beams of heaven and earth, setting the north and the south, and the stars in their places. Intellect is the science of metes and bounds; yet it sees no bound to the

eternal proceeding of law forth into nature. All the sciences are only new applications, each translatable into the other, of the one law which his mind is.

This, gentlemen, is the topic on which I shall speak, — the natural and permanent function of the Scholar, as he is no permissive or accidental appearance, but an organic agent in nature. He is here to be the beholder of the real; self-centred amidst the superficial; here to revere the dominion of a serene necessity and be its pupil and apprentice by tracing everything home to a cause; here to be sobered, not by the cares of life, as men say, no, but by the depth of his draughts of the cup of immortality.[1]

One is tempted to affirm the office and attributes of the scholar a little the more eagerly, because of a frequent perversity of the class itself. Men are ashamed of their intellect. The men committed by profession as well as by bias to study, the clergyman, the chemist, the astronomer, the metaphysician, the poet, talk hard and worldly, and share the infatuation of cities. The poet and the citizen perfectly agree in conversation on the wise life. The poet counsels his own son as if he were a merchant. The poet with poets betrays no amiable weakness. They

all chime in, and are as inexorable as bankers on the subject of real life. They have no toleration for literature; art is only a fine word for appearance in default of matter. And they sit white over their stoves, and talk themselves hoarse over the mischief of books and the effeminacy of book-makers. But at a single strain of a bugle out of a grove, or at the dashing among the stones of a brook from the hills; at the sound of some subtle word that falls from the lips of an imaginative person, or even at the reading in solitude of some moving image of a wise poet, this grave conclusion is blown out of memory; the sun shines, and the worlds roll to music, and the poet replaces all this cowardly Self-denial and God-denial of the literary class with the conviction that to one poetic success the world will surrender on its knees. Instantly he casts in his lot with the pearl-diver and the diamond-merchant. Like them he will joyfully lose days and months, and estates and credit, in the profound hope that one restoring, all rewarding, immense success will arrive at last, which will give him at one bound a universal dominion. And rightly; for if his wild prayers are granted, if he is to succeed, his achievement is the piercing of the brass heavens of use and

limitation, and letting in a beam of the pure eternity which burns up this limbo of shadows and chimeras in which we dwell. Yes, Nature is too strong for us; she will not be denied; she has balsams for our hurts, and hellebores for our insanities. She does not bandy words with us, but comes in with a new ravishing experience and makes the old time ridiculous. Every poet knows the unspeakable hope, and represents its audacity.'

I am not disposed to magnify temporary differences, but for the moment it appears as if in former times learning and intellectual accomplishments had secured to the possessor greater rank and authority. If this were only the reaction from excessive expectations from literature, now disappointed, it were a just censure. It was superstitious to exact too much from philosophers and the literary class. The Sophists, the Alexandrian grammarians, the wits of Queen Anne's, the philosophers and diffusion-societies have not much helped us. Granted, freely granted. Men run out of one superstition into an opposite superstition, and practical people in America give themselves wonderful airs. The cant of the time inquires superciliously after the new ideas; it believes that ideas do not lead to

the owning of stocks; they are perplexing and effeminating.

Young men, I warn you against the clamors of these self-praising frivolous activities, — against these busy-bodies; against irrational labor; against chattering, meddlesome, rich and official people. If their doing came to any good end! Action is legitimate and good; forever be it honored! right, original, private, necessary action, proceeding new from the heart of man, and going forth to beneficent and as yet incalculable ends. Yes; but not a petty fingering and running, a senseless repeating of yesterday's fingering and running; an acceptance of the method and frauds of other men; an overdoing and busy-ness which pretends to the honors of action, but resembles the twitches of St. Vitus. The action of these men I cannot respect, for they do not respect it themselves. They were better and more respectable abed and asleep. All the best of this class, all who have any insight or generosity of spirit are frequently disgusted, and fain to put it behind them.'

Gentlemen, I do not wish to check your impulses to action: I would not hinder you of one swing of your arm. I do not wish to see you effeminate gownsmen, taking hold of the

world with the tips of your fingers, or that life should be to you, as it is to many, optical, not practical. Far otherwise: I rather wish you to experiment boldly and give play to your energies, but not, if I could prevail with you, in conventional ways. I should wish your energy to run in works and emergencies growing out of your personal character. Nature will fast enough instruct you in the occasion and the need, and will bring to each of you the crowded hour, the great opportunity. Love, Rectitude, everlasting Fame, will come to each of you in loneliest places with their grand alternatives, and Honor watches to see whether you dare seize the palms.'

I have no quarrel with action, only I prefer no action to misaction, and I reject the abusive application of the term *practical* to those lower activities. Let us hear no more of the practical men, or I will tell you something of them, — this, namely, that the scholar finds in them unlooked-for acceptance of his most paradoxical experience. There is confession in their eyes, and if they parade their business and public importance, it is by way of apology and palliation for not being the students and obeyers of those diviner laws. Talk frankly with them and you

learn that you have little to tell them; that the Spirit of the Age has been before you with influences impossible to parry or resist. The dry-goods men, and the brokers, the lawyers and the manufacturers, are idealists, and only differ from the philosopher in the intensity of the charge. We are all contemporaries and bones of one body.

The shallow clamor against theoretic men comes from the weak. Able men may sometimes affect a contempt for thought, which no able man ever feels. For what alone in the history of this world interests all men in proportion as they are men? What but truth, and perpetual advance in knowledge of it, and brave obedience to it in right action? Every man or woman who can voluntarily or involuntarily give them any insight or suggestion on these secrets they will hearken after. The poet writes his verse on a scrap of paper, and instantly the desire and love of all mankind take charge of it, as if it were Holy Writ. What need has he to cross the sill of his door? Why need he meddle with politics? His idlest thought, his yesternight's dream is told already in the Senate. What the Genius whispered him at night he reported to the young men at dawn. He rides in

them, he traverses sea and land. The engineer in the locomotive is waiting for him; the steamboat is hissing at the wharf, and the wheels whirling to go.' 'T is wonderful, 't is almost scandalous, this extraordinary favoritism shown to poets. I do not mean to excuse it. I admit the enormous partiality. It only shows that such is the gulf between our perception and our painting, the eye is so wise, and the hand so clumsy, that all the human race have agreed to value a man according to his power of expression. For him arms, art, politics, trade, waited like menials, until the lord of the manor should arrive. Even the demonstrations of Nature for millenniums seem not to have attained their end, until this interpreter arrives. "I," said the great-hearted Kepler, "may well wait a hundred years for a reader, since God Almighty has waited six thousand years for an observer like myself."

Genius is a poor man and has no house, but see, this proud landlord who has built the palace and furnished it so delicately, opens it to him and beseeches him to make it honorable by entering there and eating bread. Where is the palace in England whose tenants are not too happy if it can make a home for Pope or Addi-

son or Swift or Burke or Canning or Tennyson? Or if wealth has humors and wishes to shake off the yoke and assert itself, — oh, by all means let it try! Will it build its fences very high, and make its Almacks too narrow for a wise man to enter?' Will it be independent? I incline to concede the isolation which it asks, that it may learn that it is not independent but parasitical.

There could always be traced, in the most barbarous tribes, and also in the most character-destroying civilization, some vestiges of a faith in genius, as in the exemption of a priesthood or bards or artists from taxes and tolls levied on other men; or in civic distinction; or in enthusiastic homage; or in hospitalities; as if men would signify their sense that genius and virtue should not pay money for house and land and bread, because they have a royal right in these and in all things, — a first mortgage that takes effect before the right of the present proprietor. For they are the First Good, of which Plato affirms that "all things are for its sake, and it is the cause of everything beautiful."

This reverence is the reestablishment of natural order; for as the solidest rocks are made up of invisible gases, as the world is made of thickened light and arrested electricity, so men

know that ideas are the parents of men and things ; there was never anything that did not proceed from a thought. The scholar has a deep ideal interest in the moving show around him. He knew the motley system in its egg. We have — have we not ? — a real relation to markets and brokers and currency and coin. "Gold and silver," says one of the Platonists, "grow in the earth from the celestial gods, — an efflux-ion from them." The unmentionable dollar itself has at last a high origin in moral and metaphysical nature. Union Pacific stock is not quite private property, but the quality and essence of the universe is in that also. Have we less interest in ships or in shops, in manual work or in household affairs ; in any object of Nature, or in any handiwork of man ; in any relation of life or custom of society ? The scholar is to show, in each, identity and connexion ; he is to show its origin in the brain of man, and its secret history and issues. He is the attorney of the world, and can never be superfluous where so vast a variety of questions are ever coming up to be solved, and for ages.

I proceed to say that the allusions just now made to the extent of his duties, the manner in which every day's events will find him in

work, may show that his place is no sinecure. The scholar, when he comes, will be known by an energy that will animate all who see him. The labor of ambition and avarice will appear fumbling beside his. In the right hands, literature is not resorted to as a consolation, and by the broken and decayed, but as a decalogue. In this country we are fond of results and of short ways to them ; and most in this department. In our experiences, learning is not learned, nor is genius wise. The name of the Scholar is taken in vain. We who should be the channel of that unweariable Power which never sleeps, must give our diligence no holidays. Other men are planting and building, baking and tanning, running and sailing, heaving and carrying, each that he may peacefully execute the fine function by which they all are helped. Shall he play, whilst their eyes follow him from far with reverence, attributing to him the delving in great fields of thought, and conversing with supernatural allies? If he is not kindling his torch or collecting oil, he will fear to go by a workshop ; he will not dare to hear the music of a saw or plane ; the steam-engine will reprimand, the steam-pipe will hiss at him ; he cannot look a blacksmith in the eye ; in the field he will be shamed by mowers

and reapers. The speculative man, the scholar, is the right hero. He is brave, because he sees the omnipotence of that which inspires him. Is there only one courage and one warfare? I cannot manage sword and rifle; can I not therefore be brave? I thought there were as many courages as men. Is an armed man the only hero? Is a man only the breech of a gun or the haft of a bowie-knife? Men of thought fail in fighting down malignity, because they wear other armor than their own. Let them decline henceforward foreign methods and foreign courages. Let them do that which they can do. Let them fight by their strength, not by their weakness. It seems to me that the thoughtful man needs no armor but this — concentration.' One thing is for him settled, that he is to come at his ends. He is not there to defend himself, but to deliver his message; if his voice is clear, then clearly; if husky, then huskily; if broken, he can at least scream; gag him, he can still write it; bruise, mutilate him, cut off his hands and feet, he can still crawl towards his object on his stumps. It is the corruption of our generation that men value a long life, and do not esteem life simply as a means of expressing a sentiment.

The great English patriot Algernon Sidney wrote to his father from his prison a little before his execution: "I have ever had in my mind that when God should cast me into such a condition as that I cannot save my life but by doing an indecent thing he shows me the time has come when I should resign it." Beauty belongs to the sentiment, and is always departing from those who depart out of that. The hero rises out of all comparison with contemporaries and with ages of men, because he disesteems old age, and lands, and money, and power, and will oppose all mankind at the call of that private and perfect Right and Beauty in which he lives.

Man is a torch borne in the wind. The ends I have hinted at made the scholar or spiritual man indispensable to the Republic or Commonwealth of Man. Nature could not leave herself without a seer and expounder. But he could not see or teach without organs. The same necessity then that would create him reappears in his splendid gifts. There is no power in the mind but in turn becomes an instrument. The descent of genius into talents is part of the natural order and history of the world. The incarnation must be. We cannot eat the granite nor drink hydrogen. They must be decom-

pounded and recompounded into corn and water before they can enter our flesh. There is a great deal of spiritual energy in the universe, but it is not palpable to us until we can make it up into man. There is plenty of air, but it is worth nothing until by gathering it into sails we can get it into shape and service to carry us and our cargo across the sea. Then it is paid for by hundreds of thousands of our money. Plenty of water also, sea full, sky full; who cares for it? But when we can get it where we want it, and in measured portions, on a mill-wheel, or boat-paddle, we will buy it with millions. There is plenty of wild azote and carbon unappropriated, but it is nought till we have made it up into loaves and soup. So we find it in higher relations. There is plenty of wild wrath, but it steads not until we can get it racked off, shall I say? and bottled into persons; a little pure, and not too much, to every head. How many young geniuses we have known, and none but ourselves will ever hear of them for want in them of a little talent!

Ah, gentlemen, I own I love talents and accomplishments; the feet and hands of genius. As Burke said, "it is not only our duty to make the right known, but to make it prevalent." So I delight to see the Godhead in distribution;

to see men that can come at their ends.' These shrewd faculties belong to man. I love to see them in play, and to see them trained: this memory carrying in its caves the pictures of all the past, and rendering them in the instant when they can serve the possessor; — the craft of mathematical combination, which carries a working-plan of the heavens and of the earth in a formula. I am apt to believe, with the Emperor Charles V., that "as many languages as a man knows, so many times is he a man." I like to see a man of that virtue that no obscurity or disguise can conceal, who wins all souls to his way of thinking. I delight in men adorned and weaponed with manlike arts, who could alone, or with a few like them, reproduce Europe and America, the result of our civilization.

It is excellent when the individual is ripened to that degree that he touches both the centre and the circumference, so that he is not only widely intelligent, but carries a council in his breast for the emergency of to-day; and alternates the contemplation of the fact in pure intellect, with the total conversion of the intellect into energy; Jove, and the thunderbolt launched from his hand. Perhaps I value power of achievement a little more because in America there

seems to be a certain indigence in this respect. I think there is no more intellectual people than ours. They are very apprehensive and curious. But there is a sterility of talent. These iron personalities, such as in Greece and Italy and once in England were formed to strike fear into kings and draw the eager service of thousands, rarely appear. We have general intelligence, but no Cyclop arms. A very little intellectual force makes a disproportionately great impression, and when one observes how eagerly our people entertain and discuss a new theory, whether home-born or imported, and how little thought operates how great an effect, one would draw a favorable inference as to their intellectual and spiritual tendencies. It seems as if two or three persons coming who should add to a high spiritual aim great constructive energy, would carry the country with them.

In making this claim of costly accomplishments for the scholar, I chiefly wish to infer the dignity of his work by the lustre of his appointments. He is not cheaply equipped. The universe was rifled to furnish him. He is to forge out of coarsest ores the sharpest weapons. But if the weapons are valued for themselves, if his talents assume an independence, and come to

work for ostentation, they cannot serve him. It was said of an eminent Frenchman, that "he was drowned in his talents." The peril of every fine faculty is the delight of playing with it for pride. Talent is commonly developed at the expense of character, and the greater it grows, the more is the mischief and misleading; so that presently all is wrong, talent is mistaken for genius, a dogma or system for truth, ambition for greatness, ingenuity for poetry, sensuality for art; and the young, coming up with innocent hope, and looking around them at education, at the professions and employments, at religious and literary teachers and teaching, — finding that nothing outside corresponds to the noble order in the soul, are confused, and become skeptical and forlorn.' Hope is taken from youth unless there be, by the grace of God, sufficient vigor in their instinct to say, "All is wrong and human invention. I declare anew from Heaven that truth exists new and beautiful and profitable forevermore." Order is heaven's first law. These gifts, these senses, these facilities are excellent as long as subordinated; all wasted and mischievous when they assume to lead and not obey. What is the use of strength or cunning or beauty, or musical voice, or birth, or

breeding, or money to a maniac? Yet society, in which we live, is subject to fits of frenzy; sometimes is for an age together a maniac, with birth, breeding, beauty, cunning, strength and money. And there is but one defence against this principle of chaos, and that is the principle of order, or brave return at all hours to an infinite common sense, to the mother-wit, to the wise instinct, to the pure intellect.

When a man begins to dedicate himself to a particular function, as his logical, or his remembering, or his oratorical, or his arithmetical skill, the advance of his character and genius pauses; he has run to the end of his line; seal the book; the development of that mind is arrested. The scholar is lost in the showman. Society is babyish, and is dazzled and deceived by the weapon, without inquiring into the cause for which it is drawn; like boys by the drums and colors of the troops.

The objection of men of the world to what they call the morbid intellectual tendency in our young men at present, is not a hostility to their truth, but to this, its shortcoming, that the idealistic views unfit their children for business in their sense, and do not qualify them for any complete life of a better kind. They threaten

the validity of contracts, but do not prevail so far as to establish the new kingdom which shall supersede contracts, oaths and property. "We have seen to weariness what you cannot do; now show us what you can and will do," asks the practical man, and with perfect reason.

We are not afraid of new truth, — of truth never, new, or old, — no, but of a counterfeit. Everybody hates imbecility and shortcoming, not new methods. The astronomer is not ridiculous inasmuch as he is an astronomer, but inasmuch as he is not an astronomer. Be that you are: be that cheerly and sovereignly. Plotinus makes no apologies, he says roundly, "the knowledge of the senses is truly ludicrous." "Body and its properties belong to the region of nonentity, as if more of body was necessarily produced where a defect of being happens in a greater degree." "Matter," says Plutarch, "is privation." Let the man of ideas at this hour be as direct, and as fully committed. Have you a thought in your heart? There was never such need of it as now. As we read the newspapers, as we see the effrontery with which money and power carry their ends and ride over honesty and good meaning, patriotism and religion seem to shriek like ghosts. We will not speak for them,

because to speak for them seems so weak and hopeless. We will hold fast our opinion and die in silence. But a true orator will make us feel that the states and kingdoms, the senators, lawyers and rich men are caterpillars' webs and caterpillars, when seen in the light of this despised and imbecile truth. Then we feel what cowards we have been. Truth alone is great. The orator too becomes a fool and a shadow before this light which lightens through him. It shines backward and forward, diminishes and annihilates everybody, and the prophet so gladly feels his personality lost in this victorious life. The spiritual nature exhibits itself so in its counteraction to any accumulation of material force. There is no mass that can be a counterweight for it. This makes one man good against mankind.[1] This is the secret of eloquence, for it is the end of eloquence in a half-hour's discourse, — perhaps by a few sentences, — to persuade a multitude of persons to renounce their opinions, and change the course of life. They go forth not the men they came in, but shriven, convicted and converted.

We have many revivals of religion. We have had once what was called the Revival of Letters. I wish to see a revival of the human mind: to

see men's sense of duty extend to the cherishing and use of their intellectual powers: their religion should go with their thought and hallow it. Whosoever looks with heed into his thoughts will find that our science of the mind has not got far. He will find there is somebody within him that knows more than he does, a certain dumb life in life; a simple wisdom behind all acquired wisdom; somewhat not educated or educable; not altered or alterable; a mother-wit which does not learn by experience or by books, but knew it all already; makes no progress, but was wise in youth as in age. More or less clouded it yet resides the same in all, saying *Ay*, *ay*, or *No*, *no* to every proposition. Yet its grand *Ay* and its grand *No* are more musical than all eloquence. Nobody has found the limit of its knowledge. Whatever object is brought before it is already well known to it. Its justice is perfect; its look is catholic and universal, its light ubiquitous like the sun. It does not put forth organs, it rests in presence: yet trusted and obeyed in happy natures it becomes active and salient, and makes new means for its great ends.

The scholar then is unfurnished who has only literary weapons. He ought to have as many talents as he can; memory, arithmetic, practical

power, manners, temper, lion-heart, are all good things, and if he has none of them he can still manage, if he have the main-mast, — if he is anything. But he must have the resource of resources, and be planted on necessity.' For the sure months are bringing him to an examination-day in which nothing is remitted or excused, and for which no tutor, no book, no lectures, and almost no preparation can be of the least avail. He will have to answer certain questions, which, I must plainly tell you, cannot be staved off. For all men, all women, Time, your country, your condition, the invisible world, are the interrogators: *Who are you? What do you? Can you obtain what you wish? Is there method in your consciousness? Can you see tendency in your life? Can you help any soul?*

Can he answer these questions? can he dispose of them? Happy if you can answer them mutely in the order and disposition of your life! Happy for more than yourself, a benefactor of men, if you can answer them in works of wisdom, art or poetry; bestowing on the general mind of men organic creations, to be the guidance and delight of all who know them. These questions speak to Genius, to that power which is underneath and greater than all talent, and which proceeds out

of the constitution of every man: to Genius, which is an emanation of that it tells of; whose private counsels are not tinged with selfishness, but are laws. Men of talent fill the eye with their pretension. They go out into some camp of their own, and noisily persuade society that this thing which they do is the needful cause of all men. They have talents for contention, and they nourish a small difference into a loud quarrel. But the world is wide, nobody will go there after to-morrow. The gun they have pointed can defend nothing but itself, nor itself any longer than the man is by. What is the use of artificial positions? But Genius has no taste for weaving sand, or for any trifling, but flings itself on real elemental things, which are powers, self-defensive; which first subsist, and then resist unwearіably forevermore all that opposes. Genius has truth and clings to it, so that what it says and does is not in a by-road, visited only by curiosity, but on the great highways of Nature, which were before the Appian Way, and which all souls must travel. Genius delights only in statements which are themselves true, which attack and wound any who opposes them, whether he who brought them here remains here or not; — which are live men, and do daily declare fresh war against all falsehood

and custom, and will not let an offender go; which society cannot dispose of or forget, but which abide there and will not down at anybody's bidding, but stand frowning and formidable, and will and must be finally obeyed and done.

The scholar must be ready for bad weather, poverty, insult, weariness, repute of failure and many vexations. He must have a great patience, and ride at anchor and vanquish every enemy whom his small arms cannot reach, by the grand resistance of submission, of ceasing to do. He is to know that in the last resort he is not here to work, but to be worked upon. He is to eat insult, drink insult, be clothed and shod in insult until he has learned that this bitter bread and shameful dress is also wholesome and warm, is, in short, indifferent; is of the same chemistry as praise and fat living; that they also are disgrace and soreness to him who has them. I think much may be said to discourage and dissuade the young scholar from his career. Freely be that said. Dissuade all you can from the lists. Sift the wheat, frighten away the lighter souls. Let us keep only the heavy-armed. Let those come who cannot but come, and who see that there is no choice here, no advantage and no

disadvantage compared with other careers. For the great Necessity is our patron, who distributes sun and shade after immutable laws.'

Yes, he has his dark days, he has weakness, he has waitings, he has bad company, he is pelted by storms of cares, untuning cares, untuning company. Well, let him meet them. He has not consented to the frivolity, nor to the dispersion. The practical aim is forever higher than the literary aim. He shall not submit to degradation, but shall bear these crosses with what grace he can. He is still to decline how many glittering opportunities, and to retreat, and wait. So shall you find in this penury and absence of thought a purer splendor than ever clothed the exhibitions of wit. I invite you not to cheap joys, to the flutter of gratified vanity, to a sleek and rosy comfort; no, but to bareness, to power, to enthusiasm, to the mountain of vision, to true and natural supremacy, to the society of the great, and to love. Give me bareness and poverty so that I know them as the sure heralds of the Muse. Not in plenty, not in a thriving, well-to-do condition, she delighteth. He that would sacrifice at her altar must not leave a few flowers, an apple, or some symbolic gift. No; he must

relinquish orchards and gardens, prosperity and convenience; he may live on a heath without trees; sometimes hungry, and sometimes rheumatic with cold.[1] The fire retreats and concentrates within into a pure flame, pure as the stars to which it mounts.

But, gentlemen, there is plainly no end to these expansions. I have exhausted your patience, and I have only begun. I had perhaps wiselier adhered to my first purpose of confining my illustration to a single topic, but it is so much easier to say many things than to explain one. Well, you will see the drift of all my thoughts, this, namely — that the scholar must be much more than a scholar, that his ends give value to every means, but he is to subdue and keep down his methods; that his use of books is occasional, and infinitely subordinate; that he should read a little proudly, as one who knows the original, and cannot therefore very highly value the copy.[2] In like manner he is to hold lightly every tradition, every opinion, every person, out of his piety to that Eternal Spirit which dwells unexpressed with him. He shall think very highly of his destiny. He is here to know the secret of Genius; to become, not a reader of poetry, but Homer, Dante, Milton,

Shakspeare, Swedenborg, in the fountain, through that. If one man could impart his faith to another, if I could prevail to communicate the incommunicable mysteries, you should see the breadth of your realm; — that ever as you ascend your proper and native path, you receive the keys of Nature and history, and rise on the same stairs to science and to joy.'

XI

PLUTARCH

The soul
Shall have society of its own rank:
Be great, be true, and all the Scipios,
The Catos, the wise patriots of Rome,
Shall flock to you and tarry by your side
And comfort you with their high company.

PLUTARCH[1]

IT is remarkable that of an author so familiar as Plutarch, not only to scholars, but to all reading men, and whose history is so easily gathered from his works, no accurate memoir of his life, not even the dates of his birth and death, should have come down to us. Strange that the writer of so many illustrious biographies should wait so long for his own. It is agreed that he was born about the year 50 of the Christian era. He has been represented as having been the tutor of the Emperor Trajan, as dedicating one of his books to him, as living long in Rome in great esteem, as having received from Trajan the consular dignity, and as having been appointed by him the governor of Greece. He was a man whose real superiority had no need of these flatteries. Meantime, the simple truth is, that he was not the tutor of Trajan, that he dedicated no book to him, was not consul in Rome, nor governor of Greece; appears never to have been

[1] This paper was originally printed as an introduction to Plutarch's *Morals*, edited by Professor William W. Goodwin, and published, in 1871, by Messrs. Little, Brown & Co., through whose courtesy it is included in this edition.

in Rome but on two occasions, and then on business of the people of his native city, Chæronea; and though he found or made friends at Rome, and read lectures to some friends or scholars, he did not know or learn the Latin language there; with one or two doubtful exceptions, never quotes a Latin book; and though the contemporary, in his youth or in his old age, of Persius, Juvenal, Lucan and Seneca, of Quintilian, Martial, Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny the Elder and the Younger, he does not cite them, and, in return, his name is never mentioned by any Roman writer. It would seem that the community of letters and of personal news was even more rare at that day than the want of printing, of railroads and telegraphs, would suggest to us.

But this neglect by his contemporaries has been compensated by an immense popularity in modern nations. Whilst his books were never known to the world in their own Greek tongue, it is curious that the Lives were translated and printed in Latin, thence into Italian, French and English, more than a century before the original Works were yet printed. For whilst the Lives were translated in Rome in 1470, and the Morals, part by part, soon after, the first printed edition of the Greek Works did

not appear until 1572. Hardly current in his own Greek, these found learned interpreters in the scholars of Germany, Spain and Italy. In France, in the middle of the most turbulent civil wars, Amyot's translation awakened general attention. His genial version of the Lives in 1559, of the Morals in 1572, had signal success.[1] King Henry IV. wrote to his wife, Marie de Medicis: "*Vive Dieu.* As God liveth, you could not have sent me anything which could be more agreeable than the news of the pleasure you have taken in this reading. Plutarch always delights me with a fresh novelty. To love him is to love me; for he has been long time the instructor of my youth. My good mother, to whom I owe all, and who would not wish, she said, to see her son an illustrious dunce, put this book into my hands almost when I was a child at the breast.[2] It has been like my conscience, and has whispered in my ear many good suggestions and maxims for my conduct and the government of my affairs." Still earlier, Rabelais cites him with due respect. Montaigne, in 1589, says: "We dunces had been lost, had not this book raised us out of the dirt. By this favor of his we dare now speak and write. The ladies are able to read to schoolmasters. 'T is our

breviary." Montesquieu drew from him his definition of law, and, in his *Pensées*, declares, "I am always charmed with Plutarch; in his writings are circumstances attached to persons, which give great pleasure;" and adds examples. Saint-Evremond read Plutarch to the great Condé under a tent. Rollin, so long the historian of antiquity for France, drew unhesitatingly his history from him. Voltaire honored him, and Rousseau acknowledged him as his master. In England, Sir Thomas North translated the Lives in 1579, and Holland the Morals in 1603, in time to be used by Shakspeare in his plays, and read by Bacon, Dryden and Cudworth.

Then, recently, there has been a remarkable revival, in France, in the taste for Plutarch and his contemporaries; led, we may say, by the eminent critic Sainte-Beuve. M. Octave Gréard, in a critical work on the Morals, has carefully corrected the popular legends and constructed from the works of Plutarch himself his true biography. M. Levéque has given an exposition of his moral philosophy, under the title of "A Physician of the Soul," in the Revue des Deux Mondes; and M. C. Martha, chapters on the genius of Marcus Aurelius, of Persius and

Lucretius, in the same journal; whilst M. Fustel de Coulanges has explored from its roots in the Aryan race, then in their Greek and Roman descendants, the primæval religion of the household.'

Plutarch occupies a unique place in literature as an encyclopædia of Greek and Roman antiquity. Whatever is eminent in fact or in fiction, in opinion, in character, in institutions, in science, — natural, moral or metaphysical, — or in memorable sayings, drew his attention and came to his pen with more or less fulness of record. He is, among prose writers, what Chaucer is among English poets, a repertory for those who want the story without searching for it at first hand, — a compend of all accepted traditions. And all this without any supreme intellectual gifts. He is not a profound mind; not a master in any science; not a lawgiver, like Lycurgus or Solon; not a metaphysician, like Parmenides, Plato or Aristotle; not the founder of any sect or community, like Pythagoras or Zeno; not a naturalist, like Pliny or Linnæus; not a leader of the mind of a generation, like Plato or Goethe. But if he had not the highest powers, he was yet a man of rare gifts. He had that universal sympathy with genius which makes

all its victories his own; though he never used verse, he had many qualities of the poet in the power of his imagination, the speed of his mental associations and his sharp, objective eyes. But what specially marks him, he is a chief example of the illumination of the intellect by the force of morals. Though the most amiable of boon companions, this generous religion gives him *aperçus* like Goethe's.

Plutarch was well-born, well-taught, well-conditioned; a self-respecting, amiable man, who knew how to better a good education by travels, by devotion to affairs private and public; a master of ancient culture, he read books with a just criticism; eminently social, he was a king in his own house, surrounded himself with select friends, and knew the high value of good conversation; and declares in a letter written to his wife that "he finds scarcely an erasure, as in a book well-written, in the happiness of his life."

The range of mind makes the glad writer. The reason of Plutarch's vast popularity is his humanity. A man of society, of affairs; upright, practical; a good son, husband, father and friend, — he has a taste for common life, and knows the court, the camp and the judgment-hall, but also the forge, farm, kitchen and cel-

lar, and every utensil and use, and with a wise man's or a poet's eye. Thought defends him from any degradation. He does not lose his way, for the attractions are from within, not from without. A poet in verse or prose must have a sensuous eye, but an intellectual co-perception. Plutarch's memory is full, and his horizon wide. Nothing touches man but he feels to be his; he is tolerant even of vice, if he finds it genial; enough a man of the world to give even the Devil his due, and would have hugged Robert Burns, when he cried:—

"O wad ye tak' a thought and mend!"

He is a philosopher with philosophers, a naturalist with naturalists, and sufficiently a mathematician to leave some of his readers, now and then, at a long distance behind him, or respectfully skipping to the next chapter.' But this scholastic omniscience of our author engages a new respect, since they hope he understands his own diagram.

He perpetually suggests Montaigne, who was the best reader he has ever found, though Montaigne excelled his master in the point and surprise of his sentences. Plutarch had a religion which Montaigne wanted, and which defends

him from wantonness; and though Plutarch is as plain-spoken, his moral sentiment is always pure. What better praise has any writer received than he whom Montaigne finds "frank in giving things, not words," dryly adding, "it vexes me that he is so exposed to the spoil of those that are conversant with him." It is one of the felicities of literary history, the tie which inseparably couples these two names across fourteen centuries. Montaigne, whilst he grasps Etienne de la Boèce with one hand, reaches back the other to Plutarch. These distant friendships charm us, and honor all the parties, and make the best example of the universal citizenship and fraternity of the human mind.

I do not know where to find a book — to borrow a phrase of Ben Jonson's — "so rammed with life," and this in chapters chiefly ethical, which are so prone to be heavy and sentimental. No poet could illustrate his thought with more novel or striking similes or happier anecdotes. His style is realistic, picturesque and varied; his sharp objective eyes seeing everything that moves, shines or threatens in nature or art, or thought or dreams. Indeed, twilights, shadows, omens and spectres have a charm for him. He believes in witchcraft and the evil eye, in demons

and ghosts, — but prefers, if you please, to talk of these in the morning. His vivacity and abundance never leave him to loiter or pound on an incident. I admire his rapid and crowded style, as if he had such store of anecdotes of his heroes that he is forced to suppress more than he recounts, in order to keep up with the hasting history.

His surprising merit is the genial facility with which he deals with his manifold topics. There is no trace of labor or pain. He gossips of heroes, philosophers and poets; of virtues and genius; of love and fate and empires. It is for his pleasure that he recites all that is best in his reading: he prattles history. But he is no courtier, and no Boswell: he is ever manly, far from fawning, and would be welcome to the sages and warriors he reports, as one having a native right to admire and recount these stirring deeds and speeches. I find him a better teacher of rhetoric than any modern. His superstitions are poetic, aspiring, affirmative. A poet might rhyme all day with hints drawn from Plutarch, page on page. No doubt, this superior suggestion for the modern reader owes much to the foreign air, the Greek wine, the religion and history of antique heroes. Thebes, Sparta, Athens and

Rome charm us away from the disgust of the passing hour. But his own cheerfulness and rude health are also magnetic. In his immense quotation and allusion we quickly cease to discriminate between what he quotes and what he invents. We sail on his memory into the ports of every nation, enter into every private property, and do not stop to discriminate owners, but give him the praise of all. 'T is all Plutarch, by right of eminent domain, and all property vests in this emperor.' This facility and abundance make the joy of his narrative, and he is read to the neglect of more careful historians. Yet he inspires a curiosity, sometimes makes a necessity, to read them. He disowns any attempt to rival Thucydides; but I suppose he has a hundred readers where Thucydides finds one, and Thucydides must often thank Plutarch for that one. He has preserved for us a multitude of precious sentences, in prose or verse, of authors whose books are lost; and these embalmed fragments, through his loving selection alone, have come to be proverbs of later mankind. I hope it is only my immense ignorance that makes me believe that they do not survive out of his pages, — not only Thespis, Polemos, Euphorion, Ariston, Evenus, etc., but

fragments of Menander and Pindar. At all events, it is in reading the fragments he has saved from lost authors that I have hailed another example of the sacred care which has unrolled in our times, and still searches and unrolls *papyri* from ruined libraries and buried cities, and has drawn attention to what an ancient might call the politeness of Fate, — we will say, more advisedly, the benign Providence which uses the violence of war, of earthquakes and changed water-courses, to save underground through barbarous ages the relics of ancient art, and thus allows us to witness the upturning of the alphabets of old races, and the deciphering of forgotten languages, so to complete the annals of the forefathers of Asia, Africa and Europe.

His delight in poetry makes him cite with joy the speech of Gorgias, "that the tragic poet who deceived was juster than he who deceived not, and he that was deceived was wiser than he who was not deceived."[1]

It is a consequence of this poetic trait in his mind, that I confess that, in reading him, I embrace the particulars, and carry a faint memory of the argument or general design of the chapter; but he is not less welcome, and he leaves the

reader with a relish and a necessity for completing his studies. Many examples might be cited of nervous expression and happy allusion, that indicate a poet and an orator, though he is not ambitious of these titles, and cleaves to the security of prose narrative, and only shows his intellectual sympathy with these; yet I cannot forbear to cite one or two sentences which none who reads them will forget. In treating of the style of the Pythian Oracle, he says: —

"Do you not observe, some one will say, what a grace there is in Sappho's measures, and how they delight and tickle the ears and fancies of the hearers? Whereas the Sibyl, with her frantic grimaces, uttering sentences altogether thoughtful and serious, neither fucused nor perfumed, continues her voice a thousand years through the favor of the Divinity that speaks within her."

Another gives an insight into his mystic tendencies: —

"Early this morning, asking Epaminondas about the manner of Lysis's burial, I found that Lysis had taught him as far as the incommunicable mysteries of our sect, and that the same Dæmon that waited on Lysis, presided over him, if I can guess at the pilot from the sailing of the

ship. The paths of life are large, but in few are men directed by the Dæmons. When Theanor had said this, he looked attentively on Epaminondas, as if he designed a fresh search into his nature and inclinations."

And here is his sentiment on superstition, somewhat condensed in Lord Bacon's citation of it: "I had rather a great deal that men should say, There was no such man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say that there was one Plutarch that would eat up his children as soon as they were born, as the poets speak of Saturn."

The chapter "On Fortune" should be read by poets, and other wise men; and the vigor of his pen appears in the chapter "Whether the Athenians were more Warlike or Learned," and in his attack upon Usurers.

There is, of course, a wide difference of time in the writing of these discourses, and so in their merit. Many of them are mere sketches or notes for chapters in preparation, which were never digested or finished. Many are notes for disputations in the lecture-room. His poor indignation against Herodotus was perhaps a youthful prize essay: it appeared to me captious and labored; or perhaps, at a rhetorician's school, the subject

of Herodotus being the lesson of the day, Plutarch was appointed by lot to take the adverse side.

The plain speaking of Plutarch, as of the ancient writers generally, coming from the habit of writing for one sex only, has a great gain for brevity, and, in our new tendencies of civilization, may tend to correct a false delicacy.

We are always interested in the man who treats the intellect well. We expect it from the philosopher, — from Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza and Kant; but we know that metaphysical studies in any but minds of large horizon and incessant inspiration have their dangers. One asks sometimes whether a metaphysician can treat the intellect well. The central fact is the superhuman intelligence, pouring into us from its unknown fountain, to be received with religious awe, and defended from any mixture of our will.' But this high Muse comes and goes; and the danger is that, when the Muse is wanting, the student is prone to supply its place with microscopic subtleties and logomachy. It is fatal to spiritual health to lose your admiration. "Let others wrangle," said St. Augustine; "I will wonder." Plato and Plotinus are enthusiasts, who honor the race; but the logic of the soph-

ists and materialists, whether Greek or French, fills us with disgust. Whilst we expect this awe and reverence of the spiritual power from the philosopher in his closet, we praise it in the man of the world; — the man who lives on quiet terms with existing institutions, yet indicates his perception of these high oracles; as do Plutarch, Montaigne, Hume and Goethe. These men lift themselves at once from the vulgar and are not the parasites of wealth. Perhaps they sometimes compromise, go out to dine, make and take compliments; but they keep open the source of wisdom and health. Plutarch is uniformly true to this centre. He had not lost his wonder. He is a pronounced idealist, who does not hesitate to say, like another Berkeley, "Matter is itself privation;" and again, "The Sun is the cause that all men are ignorant of Apollo, by sense withdrawing the rational intellect from that which is to that which appears." He thinks that "souls are naturally endowed with the faculty of prediction;" he delights in memory, with its miraculous power of resisting time. He thinks that "Alexander invaded Persia with greater assistance from Aristotle than from his father Philip." He thinks that "he who has ideas of his own is a bad judge of another man's,

it being true that the Eleans would be most proper judges of the Olympic games, were no Eleans gamesters." He says of Socrates that he endeavored to bring reason and things together, and make truth consist with sober sense. He wonders with Plato at that nail of pain and pleasure which fastens the body to the mind. The mathematics give him unspeakable pleasure, but he chiefly liked that proportion which teaches us to account that which is just, equal; and not that which is equal, just.

Of philosophy he is more interested in the results than in the method. He has a just instinct of the presence of a master, and prefers to sit as a scholar with Plato, than as a disputant; and true to his practical character, he wishes the philosopher not to hide in a corner, but to commend himself to men of public regards and ruling genius: "for, if he once possess such a man with principles of honor and religion, he takes a compendious method, by doing good to one, to oblige a great part of mankind." 'T is a temperance, not an eclecticism, which makes him adverse to the severe Stoic, or the Gymnosophist, or Diogenes, or any other extremist. That vice of theirs shall not hinder him from citing any good word they chance to drop. He is an eclectic

in such sense as Montaigne was, — willing to be an expectant, not a dogmatist.

In many of these chapters it is easy to infer the relation between the Greek philosophers and those who came to them for instruction. This teaching was no play nor routine, but strict, sincere and affectionate. The part of each of the class is as important as that of the master. They are like the baseball players, to whom the pitcher, the bat, the catcher and the scout are equally important. And Plutarch thought, with Ariston, "that neither a bath nor a lecture served any purpose, unless they were purgative." Plutarch has such a keen pleasure in realities that he has none in verbal disputes; he is impatient of sophistry, and despises the Epicharmian disputations: as, that he who ran in debt yesterday owes nothing to-day, as being another man; so, he that was yesterday invited to supper, the next night comes an unbidden guest, for that he is quite another person.

Except as historical curiosities, little can be said in behalf of the scientific value of the Opinions of the Philosophers, the Questions and the Symposiacs. They are, for the most part, very crude opinions; many of them so puerile that one would believe that Plutarch in

his haste adopted the notes of his younger auditors, some of them jocosely misreporting the dogma of the professor, who laid them aside as *memoranda* for future revision, which he never gave, and they were posthumously published. Now and then there are hints of superior science. You may cull from this record of barbarous guesses of shepherds and travellers, statements that are predictions of facts established in modern science. Usually, when Thales, Anaximenes or Anaximander are quoted, it is really a good judgment. The explanation of the rainbow, of the floods of the Nile, and of the *remora*, etc., are just; and the bad guesses are not worse than many of Lord Bacon's.

His Natural History is that of a lover and poet, and not of a physicist.[1] His humanity stooped affectionately to trace the virtues which he loved in the animals also. "Knowing and not knowing is the affirmative or negative of the dog; knowing you is to be your friend; not knowing you, your enemy." He quotes Thucydides's saying that "not the desire of honor only never grows old, but much less also the inclination to society and affection to the State, which continue even in ants and bees to the very last."

But, though curious in the questions of the

schools on the nature and genesis of things, his extreme interest in every trait of character, and his broad humanity, lead him constantly to Morals, to the study of the Beautiful and Good. Hence his love of heroes, his rule of life, and his clear convictions of the high destiny of the soul. La Harpe said that "Plutarch is the genius the most naturally moral that ever existed."

'T is almost inevitable to compare Plutarch with Seneca, who, born fifty years earlier, was for many years his contemporary, though they never met, and their writings were perhaps unknown to each other. Plutarch is genial, with an endless interest in all human and divine things; Seneca, a professional philosopher, a writer of sentences, and, though he keep a sublime path, is less interesting, because less humane; and when we have shut his book, we forget to open it again. There is a certain violence in his opinions, and want of sweetness. He lacks the sympathy of Plutarch. He is tiresome through perpetual didactics. He is not happily living. Cannot the simple lover of truth enjoy the virtues of those he meets, and the virtues suggested by them, so to find himself at some time purely contented? Seneca was still more a man of the world than Plutarch; and by his

conversation with the Court of Nero, and his own skill, like Voltaire's, of living with men of business and emulating their address in affairs by great accumulation of his own property, learned to temper his philosophy with facts. He ventured far — apparently too far — for so keen a conscience as he inly had. Yet we owe to that wonderful moralist illustrious maxims; as if the scarlet vices of the times of Nero had the natural effect of driving virtue to its loftiest antagonisms. "Seneca," says L'Estrange, "was a pagan Christian, and is very good reading for our Christian pagans." He was Buddhist in his cold abstract virtue, with a certain impassibility beyond humanity. He called pity, "that fault of narrow souls." Yet what noble words we owe to him: "God divided man into men, that they might help each other;" and again, "The good man differs from God in nothing but duration." His thoughts are excellent, if only he had the right to say them. Plutarch, meantime, with every virtue under heaven, thought it the top of wisdom to philosophize yet not appear to do it, and to reach in mirth the same ends which the most serious are proposing.

Plutarch thought "truth to be the greatest good that man can receive, and the goodliest

blessing that God can give." "When you are persuaded in your mind that you cannot either offer or perform anything more agreeable to the gods than the entertaining a right notion of them, you will then avoid superstition as a no less evil than atheism." He cites Euripides to affirm, "If gods do aught dishonest, they are no gods," and the memorable words of Antigone, in Sophocles, concerning the moral sentiment:—

> "For neither now nor yesterday began
> These thoughts, which have been ever, nor yet can
> A man be found who their first entrance knew."

His faith in the immortality of the soul is another measure of his deep humanity. He reminds his friends that the Delphic oracles have given several answers the same in substance as that formerly given to Corax the Naxian:—

> "It sounds profane impiety
> To teach that human souls e'er die."

He believes that the doctrine of the Divine Providence, and that of the immortality of the soul, rest on one and the same basis. He thinks it impossible either that a man beloved of the gods should not be happy, or that a wise and just man should not be beloved of the gods.

To him the Epicureans are hateful, who held that the soul perishes when it is separated from the body. "The soul, incapable of death, suffers in the same manner in the body, as birds that are kept in a cage." He believes "that the souls of infants pass immediately into a better and more divine state."

I can easily believe that an anxious soul may find in Plutarch's chapter called "Pleasure not attainable by Epicurus," and his "Letter to his Wife Timoxena," a more sweet and reassuring argument on the immortality than in the Phædo of Plato; for Plutarch always addresses the question on the human side, and not on the metaphysical; as Walter Scott took hold of boys and young men, in England and America, and through them of their fathers. His grand perceptions of duty lead him to his stern delight in heroism; a stoic resistance to low indulgence; to a fight with fortune; a regard for truth; his love of Sparta, and of heroes like Aristides, Phocion and Cato. He insists that the highest good is in action. He thinks that the inhabitants of Asia came to be vassals to one, only for not having been able to pronounce one syllable; which is, No. So keen is his sense of allegiance to right reason, that he makes a fight against

Fortune whenever she is named. At Rome he thinks her wings were clipped: she stood no longer on a ball, but on a cube as large as Italy. He thinks it was by superior virtue that Alexander won his battles in Asia and Africa, and the Greeks theirs against Persia.

But this Stoic in his fight with Fortune, with vices, effeminacy and indolence, is gentle as a woman when other strings are touched. He is the most amiable of men. "To erect a trophy in the soul against anger is that which none but a great and victorious puissance is able to achieve." — "Anger turns the mind out of doors, and bolts the door." He has a tenderness almost to tears when he writes on "Friendship," on the "Training of Children" and on the "Love of Brothers." "There is no treasure," he says, "parents can give to their children, like a brother; 't is a friend given by nature, a gift nothing can supply; once lost, not to be replaced. The Arcadian prophet, of whom Herodotus speaks, was obliged to make a wooden foot in place of that which had been chopped off. A brother, embroiled with his brother, going to seek in the street a stranger who can take his place, resembles him who will cut off his foot to give himself one of wood."

All his judgments are noble. He thought, with Epicurus, that it is more delightful to do than to receive a kindness. "This courteous, gentle and benign disposition and behavior is not so acceptable, so obliging or delightful to any of those with whom we converse, as it is to those who have it." There is really no limit to his bounty: "It would be generous to lend our eyes and ears, nay, if possible, our reason and fortitude to others, whilst we are idle or asleep." His excessive and fanciful humanity reminds one of Charles Lamb, whilst it much exceeds him. When the guests are gone, he "would leave one lamp burning, only as a sign of the respect he bore to fires, for nothing so resembles an animal as fire. It is moved and nourished by itself, and by its brightness, like the soul, discovers and makes everything apparent, and in its quenching shows some power that seems to proceed from a vital principle, for it makes a noise and resists, like an animal dying, or violently slaughtered;" and he praises the Romans, who, when the feast was over, "dealt well with the lamps, and did not take away the nourishment they had given, but permitted them to live and shine by it."

I can almost regret that the learned editor of

the present republication has not preserved, if only as a piece of history, the preface of Mr. Morgan, the editor and in part writer of this Translation of 1718. In his dedication of the work to the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Wake, he tells the Primate that "Plutarch was the wisest man of his age, and, if he had been a Christian, one of the best too; *but it was his severe fate to flourish in those days of ignorance, which, 't is a favorable opinion to hope that the Almighty will sometime wink at; that our souls may be with these philosophers together in the same state of bliss.*" The puzzle in the worthy translator's mind between his theology and his reason well reappears in the puzzle of his sentence.

I know that the chapter of "Apothegms of Noble Commanders" is rejected by some critics as not a genuine work of Plutarch; but the matter is good, and is so agreeable to his taste and genius, that if he had found it, he would have adopted it. If he did not compile the piece, many, perhaps most of the anecdotes were already scattered in his works. If I do not lament that a work not his should be ascribed to him, I regret that he should have suffered such destruction of his own. What a trilogy is lost to

mankind in his Lives of Scipio, Epaminondas, and Pindar.[1]

His delight in magnanimity and self-sacrifice has made his books, like Homer's Iliad, a bible for heroes; and wherever the Cid is relished, the legends of Arthur, Saxon Alfred and Richard the Lion-hearted, Robert Bruce, Sydney, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, Cromwell, Nelson, Bonaparte, and Walter Scott's Chronicles in prose or verse, — there will Plutarch, who told the story of Leonidas, of Agesilaus, of Aristides, Phocion, Themistocles, Demosthenes, Epaminondas, Cæsar, Cato and the rest, sit as the bestower of the crown of noble knighthood, and laureate of the ancient world.

The chapters "On the Fortune of Alexander," in the Morals, are an important appendix to the portrait in the Lives. The union in Alexander of sublime courage with the refinement of his pure tastes, making him the carrier of civilization into the East, are in the spirit of the ideal hero, and endeared him to Plutarch. That prince kept Homer's poems not only for himself under his pillow in his tent, but carried these for the delight of the Persian youth, and made them acquainted also with the tragedies of Euripides and Sophocles. He persuaded the

Sogdians not to kill, but to cherish their aged parents; the Persians to reverence, not marry their mothers; the Scythians to bury and not eat their dead parents. What a fruit and fitting monument of his best days was his city Alexandria, to be the birthplace or home of Plotinus, St. Augustine, Synesius, Posidonius, Ammonius, Jamblichus, Porphyry, Origen, Aratus, Apollonius and Apuleius.

If Plutarch delighted in heroes, and held the balance between the severe Stoic and the indulgent Epicurean, his humanity shines not less in his intercourse with his personal friends. He was a genial host and guest, and delighted in bringing chosen companions to the supper-table. He knew the laws of conversation and the laws of good-fellowship quite as well as Horace, and has set them down with such candor and grace as to make them good reading to-day. The guests not invited to a private board by the entertainer, but introduced by a guest as his companions, the Greek called *shadows*; and the question is debated whether it was civil to bring them, and he treats it candidly, but concludes: "Therefore, when I make an invitation, since it is hard to break the custom of the place, I give my guests leave to bring shadows; but when I

myself am invited as a shadow, I assure you I refuse to go."[1] He has an objection to the introduction of music at feasts. He thought it wonderful that a man having a muse in his own breast, and all the pleasantness that would fit an entertainment, would have pipes and harps play, and by that external noise destroy all the sweetness that was proper and his own.

I cannot close these notes without expressing my sense of the valuable service which the Editor has rendered to his Author and to his readers. Professor Goodwin is a silent benefactor to the book, wherever I have compared the editions. I did not know how careless and vicious in parts the old book was, until, in recent reading of the old text, on coming on anything absurd or unintelligible, I referred to the new text and found a clear and accurate statement in its place. It is the vindication of Plutarch. The correction is not only of names of authors and of places grossly altered or misspelled, but of unpardonable liberties taken by the translators, whether from negligence or freak.

One proof of Plutarch's skill as a writer is that he bears translation so well. In spite of its carelessness and manifold faults, which, I doubt not, have tried the patience of its present learned

editor and corrector, I yet confess my enjoyment of this old version, for its vigorous English style. The work of some forty or fifty University men, some of them imperfect in their Greek, it is a monument of the English language at a period of singular vigor and freedom of style. I hope the Commission of the Philological Society in London, charged with the duty of preparing a Critical Dictionary, will not overlook these volumes, which show the wealth of their tongue to greater advantage than many books of more renown as models. It runs through the whole scale of conversation in the street, the market, the coffee-house, the law courts, the palace, the college and the church. There are, no doubt, many vulgar phrases, and many blunders of the printer; but it is the speech of business and conversation, and in every tone, from lowest to highest.

We owe to these translators many sharp perceptions of the wit and humor of their author, sometimes even to the adding of the point. I notice one, which, although the translator has justified his rendering in a note, the severer criticism of the Editor has not retained. "Were there not a sun, we might, for all the other stars, pass our days in the Reverend Dark, as Hera-

For Joy and Beauty planted it
With faerie gardens cheered,
And boding Fancy haunted it
With men and women weird.

George Ripley



LIFE AND LETTERS IN NEW ENGLAND

THE ancient manners were giving way. There grew a certain tenderness on the people, not before remarked. Children had been repressed and kept in the background; now they were considered, cosseted and pampered. I recall the remark of a witty physician who remembered the hardships of his own youth; he said, "It was a misfortune to have been born when children were nothing, and to live till men were nothing."

There are always two parties, the party of the Past and the party of the Future; the Establishment and the Movement. At times the resistance is reanimated, the schism runs under the world and appears in Literature, Philosophy, Church, State and social customs. It is not easy to date these eras of activity with any precision, but in this region one made itself remarked, say in 1820 and the twenty years following.

It seemed a war between intellect and affection; a crack in Nature, which split every church in Christendom into Papal and Protestant; Calvinism into Old and New schools; Quakerism

into Old and New; brought new divisions in politics; as the new conscience touching temperance and slavery. The key to the period appeared to be that the mind had become aware of itself. Men grew reflective and intellectual. There was a new consciousness. The former generations acted under the belief that a shining social prosperity was the beatitude of man, and sacrificed uniformly the citizen to the State. The modern mind believed that the nation existed for the individual, for the guardianship and education of every man. This idea, roughly written in revolutions and national movements, in the mind of the philosopher had far more precision; the individual is the world.

This perception is a sword such as was never drawn before. It divides and detaches bone and marrow, soul and body, yea, almost the man from himself. It is the age of severance, of dissociation, of freedom, of analysis, of detachment. Every man for himself. The public speaker disclaims speaking for any other; he answers only for himself. The social sentiments are weak; the sentiment of patriotism is weak; veneration is low; the natural affections feebler than they were. People grow philosophical about native land and parents and relations. There is an uni-

versal resistance to ties and ligaments once supposed essential to civil society. The new race is stiff, heady and rebellious; they are fanatics in freedom; they hate tolls, taxes, turnpikes, banks, hierarchies, governors, yea, almost laws. They have a neck of unspeakable tenderness; it winces at a hair. They rebel against theological as against political dogmas; against mediation, or saints, or any nobility in the unseen.'

The age tends to solitude. The association of the time is accidental and momentary and hypocritical, the detachment intrinsic and progressive. The association is for power, merely, — for means; the end being the enlargement and independency of the individual. Anciently, society was in the course of things. There was a Sacred Band, a Theban Phalanx. There can be none now. College classes, military corps, or trades-unions may fancy themselves indissoluble for a moment, over their wine; but it is a painted hoop, and has no girth. The age of arithmetic and of criticism has set in. The structures of old faith in every department of society a few centuries have sufficed to destroy. Astrology, magic, palmistry, are long gone. The very last ghost is laid. Demonology is on its last legs. Prerogative, government, goes to pieces day by day.

Europe is strewn with wrecks; a constitution once a week. In social manners and morals the revolution is just as evident. In the law courts, crimes of fraud have taken the place of crimes of force. The stockholder has stepped into the place of the warlike baron. The nobles shall not any longer, as feudal lords, have power of life and death over the churls, but now, in another shape, as capitalists, shall in all love and peace eat them up as before. Nay, government itself becomes the resort of those whom government was invented to restrain. "Are there any brigands on the road?" inquired the traveller in France. "Oh, no, set your heart at rest on that point," said the landlord; "what should these fellows keep the highway for, when they can rob just as effectually, and much more at their ease, in the bureaus of office?"

In literature the effect appeared in the decided tendency of criticism. The most remarkable literary work of the age has for its hero and subject precisely this introversion: I mean the poem of Faust. In philosophy, Immanuel Kant has made the best catalogue of the human faculties and the best analysis of the mind. Hegel also, especially.[1] In science the French *savant*, exact, pitiless, with barometer, crucible, chemic test

and calculus in hand, travels into all nooks and islands, to weigh, to analyze and report. And chemistry, which is the analysis of matter, has taught us that we eat gas, drink gas, tread on gas, and are gas. The same decomposition has changed the whole face of physics; the like in all arts, modes. Authority falls, in Church, College, Courts of Law, Faculties, Medicine.' Experiment is credible; antiquity is grown ridiculous.

It marked itself by a certain predominance of the intellect in the balance of powers. 'The warm swart Earth-spirit which made the strength of past ages, mightier than it knew, with instincts instead of science, like a mother yielding food from her own breast instead of preparing it through chemic and culinary skill, — warm negro ages of sentiment and vegetation, — all gone; another hour had struck and other forms arose. Instead of the social existence which all shared, was now separation. Every one for himself; driven to find all his resources, hopes, rewards, society and deity within himself.

The young men were born with knives in their brain, a tendency to introversion, self-dissection, anatomizing of motives. The popular religion of our fathers had received many severe

shocks from the new times; from the Arminians, which was the current name of the backsliders from Calvinism, sixty years ago; then from the English philosophic theologians, Hartley and Priestley and Belsham, the followers of Locke; and then I should say much later from the slow but extraordinary influence of Swedenborg; a man of prodigious mind, though as I think tainted with a certain suspicion of insanity, and therefore generally disowned, but exerting a singular power over an important intellectual class;[1] then the powerful influence of the genius and character of Dr. Channing.

Germany had created criticism in vain for us until 1820, when Edward Everett returned from his five years in Europe, and brought to Cambridge his rich results, which no one was so fitted by natural grace and the splendor of his rhetoric to introduce and recommend. He made us for the first time acquainted with Wolff's theory of the Homeric writings, with the criticism of Heyne. The novelty of the learning lost nothing in the skill and genius of his relation, and the rudest undergraduate found a new morning opened to him in the lecture-room of Harvard Hall.

There was an influence on the young people

from the genius of Everett which was almost comparable to that of Pericles in Athens. He had an inspiration which did not go beyond his head, but which made him the master of elegance. If any of my readers were at that period in Boston or Cambridge, they will easily remember his radiant beauty of person, of a classic style, his heavy large eye, marble lids, which gave the impression of mass which the slightness of his form needed; sculptured lips; a voice of such rich tones, such precise and perfect utterance, that, although slightly nasal, it was the most mellow and beautiful and correct of all the instruments of the time. The word that he spoke, in the manner in which he spoke it, became current and classical in New England. He had a great talent for collecting facts, and for bringing those he had to bear with ingenious felicity on the topic of the moment. Let him rise to speak on what occasion soever, a fact had always just transpired which composed, with some other fact well known to the audience, the most pregnant and happy coincidence. It was remarked that for a man who threw out so many facts he was seldom convicted of a blunder. He had a good deal of special learning, and all his learning was available for purposes of the hour.

It was all new learning, that wonderfully took and stimulated the young men. It was so coldly and weightily communicated from so commanding a platform, as if in the consciousness and consideration of all history and all learning, — adorned with so many simple and austere beauties of expression, and enriched with so many excellent digressions and significant quotations, that, though nothing could be conceived beforehand less attractive or indeed less fit for green boys from Connecticut, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, with their unripe Latin and Greek reading, than exegetical discourses in the style of Voss and Wolff and Ruhnken, on the Orphic and Ante-Homeric remains, — yet this learning instantly took the highest place to our imagination in our unoccupied American Parnassus. All his auditors felt the extreme beauty and dignity of the manner, and even the coarsest were contented to go punctually to listen, for the manner, when they had found out that the subject-matter was not for them. In the lecture-room, he abstained from all ornament, and pleased himself with the play of detailing erudition in a style of perfect simplicity. In the pulpit (for he was then a clergyman) he made amends to himself and his auditor for the self-

denial of the professor's chair, and, with an infantine simplicity still, of manner, he gave the reins to his florid, quaint and affluent fancy.'

Then was exhibited all the richness of a rhetoric which we have never seen rivalled in this country. Wonderful how memorable were words made which were only pleasing pictures, and covered no new or valid thoughts. He abounded in sentences, in wit, in satire, in splendid allusion, in quotation impossible to forget, in daring imagery, in parable and even in a sort of defying experiment of his own wit and skill in giving an oracular weight to Hebrew or Rabbinical words; — feats which no man could better accomplish, such was his self-command and the security of his manner. All his speech was music, and with such variety and invention that the ear was never tired. Especially beautiful were his poetic quotations. He delighted in quoting Milton, and with such sweet modulation that he seemed to give as much beauty as he borrowed; and whatever he has quoted will be remembered by any who heard him, with inseparable association with his voice and genius. He had nothing in common with vulgarity and infirmity, but, speaking, walking, sitting, was as much aloof and uncommon as a star. The

smallest anecdote of his behavior or conversation was eagerly caught and repeated, and every young scholar could recite brilliant sentences from his sermons, with mimicry, good or bad, of his voice. This influence went much farther, for he who was heard with such throbbing hearts and sparkling eyes in the lighted and crowded churches, did not let go his hearers when the church was dismissed, but the bright image of that eloquent form followed the boy home to his bed-chamber; and not a sentence was written in academic exercises, not a declamation attempted in the college chapel, but showed the omnipresence of his genius to youthful heads. This made every youth his defender, and boys filled their mouths with arguments to prove that the orator had a heart. This was a triumph of Rhetoric. It was not the intellectual or the moral principles which he had to teach. It was not thoughts. When Massachusetts was full of his fame it was not contended that he had thrown any truths into circulation. But his power lay in the magic of form; it was in the graces of manner; in a new perception of Grecian beauty, to which he had opened our eyes. There was that finish about this person which is about women, and which distinguishes every piece of genius

from the works of talent, — that these last are more or less matured in every degree of completeness according to the time bestowed on them, but works of genius in their first and slightest form are still wholes. In every public discourse there was nothing left for the indulgence of his hearer, no marks of late hours and anxious, unfinished study, but the goddess of grace had breathed on the work a last fragrancy and glitter.

By a series of lectures largely and fashionably attended for two winters in Boston he made a beginning of popular literary and miscellaneous lecturing, which in that region at least had important results. It is acquiring greater importance every day, and becoming a national institution. I am quite certain that this purely literary influence was of the first importance to the American mind.[1]

In the pulpit Dr. Frothingham, an excellent classical and German scholar, had already made us acquainted, if prudently, with the genius of Eichhorn's theologic criticism. And Professor Norton a little later gave form and method to the like studies in the then infant Divinity School.[2] But I think the paramount source of the religious revolution was Modern Science;

beginning with Copernicus, who destroyed the pagan fictions of the Church, by showing mankind that the earth on which we live was not the centre of the Universe, around which the sun and stars revolved every day, and thus fitted to be the platform on which the Drama of the Divine Judgment was played before the assembled Angels of Heaven, — "the scaffold of the divine vengeance" Saurin called it, — but a little scrap of a planet, rushing round the sun in our system, which in turn was too minute to be seen at the distance of many stars which we behold. Astronomy taught us our insignificance in Nature; showed that our sacred as our profane history had been written in gross ignorance of the laws, which were far grander than we knew; and compelled a certain extension and uplifting of our views of the Deity and his Providence. This correction of our superstitions was confirmed by the new science of Geology, and the whole train of discoveries in every department. But we presently saw also that the religious nature in man was not affected by these errors in his understanding.[1] The religious sentiment made nothing of bulk or size, or far or near; triumphed over time as well as space; and every lesson of humility, or justice, or charity, which

the old ignorant saints had taught him, was still forever true.

Whether from these influences, or whether by a reaction of the general mind against the too formal science, religion and social life of the earlier period, — there was, in the first quarter of our nineteenth century, a certain sharpness of criticism, an eagerness for reform, which showed itself in every quarter. It appeared in the popularity of Lavater's Physiognomy, now almost forgotten. Gall and Spurzheim's Phrenology laid a rough hand on the mysteries of animal and spiritual nature, dragging down every sacred secret to a street show. The attempt was coarse and odious to scientific men, but had a certain truth in it; it felt connection where the professors denied it, and was a leading to a truth which had not yet been announced. On the heels of this intruder came Mesmerism, which broke into the inmost shrines, attempted the explanation of miracle and prophecy, as well as of creation. What could be more revolting to the contemplative philosopher! But a certain success attended it, against all expectation. It was human, it was genial, it affirmed unity and connection between remote points, and as such was excellent criticism on the narrow and dead classification of what

passed for science; and the joy with which it was greeted was an instinct of the people which no true philosopher would fail to profit by. But while society remained in doubt between the indignation of the old school and the audacity of the new, a higher note sounded. Unexpected aid from high quarters came to iconoclasts. The German poet Goethe revolted against the science of the day, against French and English science, declared war against the great name of Newton, proposed his own new and simple optics; in Botany, his simple theory of metamorphosis; — the eye of a leaf is all; every part of the plant from root to fruit is only a modified leaf, the branch of a tree is nothing but a leaf whose serratures have become twigs. He extended this into anatomy and animal life, and his views were accepted. The revolt became a revolution. Schelling and Oken introduced their ideal natural philosophy, Hegel his metaphysics, and extended it to Civil History.

The result in literature and the general mind was a return to law; in science, in politics, in social life; as distinguished from the profligate manners and politics of earlier times. The age was moral. Every immorality is a departure from nature, and is punished by natural loss and

deformity. The popularity of Combe's Constitution of Man; the humanity which was the aim of all the multitudinous works of Dickens; the tendency even of Punch's caricature, was all on the side of the people. There was a breath of new air, much vague expectation, a consciousness of power not yet finding its determinate aim.

I attribute much importance to two papers of Dr. Channing, one on Milton and one on Napoleon, which were the first specimens in this country of that large criticism which in England had given power and fame to the Edinburgh Review. They were widely read, and of course immediately fruitful in provoking emulation which lifted the style of Journalism. Dr. Channing, whilst he lived, was the star of the American Church, and we then thought, if we do not still think, that he left no successor in the pulpit. He could never be reported, for his eye and voice could not be printed, and his discourses lose their best in losing them. He was made for the public; his cold temperament made him the most unprofitable private companion; but all America would have been impoverished in wanting him. We could not then spare a single word he uttered in public, not so

much as the reading a lesson in Scripture, or a hymn, and it is curious that his printed writings are almost a history of the times; as there was no great public interest, political, literary or even economical (for he wrote on the Tariff), on which he did not leave some printed record of his brave and thoughtful opinion. A poor little invalid all his life, he is yet one of those men who vindicate the power of the American race to produce greatness.[1]

Dr. Channing took counsel in 1840 with George Ripley, to the point whether it were possible to bring cultivated, thoughtful people together, and make society that deserved the name. He had earlier talked with Dr. John Collins Warren on the like purpose, who admitted the wisdom of the design and undertook to aid him in making the experiment. Dr. Channing repaired to Dr. Warren's house on the appointed evening, with large thoughts which he wished to open. He found a well-chosen assembly of gentlemen variously distinguished; there was mutual greeting and introduction, and they were chatting agreeably on indifferent matters and drawing gently towards their great expectation, when a side-door opened, the whole company streamed in to an oyster

supper, crowned by excellent wines; and so ended the first attempt to establish æsthetic society in Boston.

Some time afterwards Dr. Channing opened his mind to Mr. and Mrs. Ripley, and with some care they invited a limited party of ladies and gentlemen. I had the honor to be present. Though I recall the fact, I do not retain any instant consequence of this attempt, or any connection between it and the new zeal of the friends who at that time began to be drawn together by sympathy of studies and of aspiration. Margaret Fuller, George Ripley, Dr. Convers Francis, Theodore Parker, Dr. Hedge, Mr. Brownson, James Freeman Clarke, William H. Channing and many others, gradually drew together and from time to time spent an afternoon at each other's houses in a serious conversation.' With them was always one well-known form, a pure idealist, not at all a man of letters, nor of any practical talent, nor a writer of books; a man quite too cold and contemplative for the alliances of friendship, with rare simplicity and grandeur of perception, who read Plato as an equal, and inspired his companions only in proportion as they were intellectual, — whilst the men of talent complained of the want of point

and precision in this abstract and religious thinker.[1]

These fine conversations, of course, were incomprehensible to some in the company, and they had their revenge in their little joke. One declared that "It seemed to him like going to heaven in a swing;" another reported that, at a knotty point in the discourse, a sympathizing Englishman with a squeaking voice interrupted with the question, "Mr. Alcott, a lady near me desires to inquire whether omnipotence abnegates attribute?"

I think there prevailed at that time a general belief in Boston that there was some concert of *doctrinaires* to establish certain opinions and inaugurate some movement in literature, philosophy and religion, of which design the supposed conspirators were quite innocent; for there was no concert, and only here and there two or three men or women who read and wrote, each alone, with unusual vivacity.[2] Perhaps they only agreed in having fallen upon Coleridge and Wordsworth and Goethe, then on Carlyle, with pleasure and sympathy. Otherwise, their education and reading were not marked, but had the American superficialness, and their studies were solitary. I suppose all

of them were surprised at this rumor of a school or sect, and certainly at the name of Transcendentalism, given nobody knows by whom, or when it was first applied. As these persons became in the common chances of society acquainted with each other, there resulted certainly strong friendships, which of course were exclusive in proportion to their heat: and perhaps those persons who were mutually the best friends were the most private and had no ambition of publishing their letters, diaries or conversation.'

From that time meetings were held for conversation, with very little form, from house to house, of people engaged in studies, fond of books, and watchful of all the intellectual light from whatever quarter it flowed. Nothing could be less formal, yet the intelligence and character and varied ability of the company gave it some notoriety and perhaps waked curiosity as to its aims and results.

Nothing more serious came of it than the modest quarterly journal called The Dial, which, under the editorship of Margaret Fuller, and later of some other, enjoyed its obscurity for four years. All its papers were unpaid contributions, and it was rather a work of friend-

ship among the narrow circle of students than the organ of any party.[1] Perhaps its writers were its chief readers: yet it contained some noble papers by Margaret Fuller, and some numbers had an instant exhausting sale, because of papers by Theodore Parker.

Theodore Parker was our Savonarola, an excellent scholar, in frank and affectionate communication with the best minds of his day, yet the tribune of the people, and the stout Reformer to urge and defend every cause of humanity with and for the humblest of mankind. He was no artist. Highly refined persons might easily miss in him the element of beauty. What he said was mere fact, almost offended you, so bald and detached; little cared he. He stood altogether for practical truth; and so to the last. He used every day and hour of his short life, and his character appeared in the last moments with the same firm control as in the midday of strength. I habitually apply to him the words of a French philosopher who speaks of "the man of Nature who abominates the steam-engine and the factory. His vast lungs breathe independence with the air of the mountains and the woods."[2]

The vulgar politician disposed of this circle cheaply as "the sentimental class." State Street

had an instinct that they invalidated contracts and threatened the stability of stocks; and it did not fancy brusque manners. Society always values, even in its teachers, inoffensive people, susceptible of conventional polish. The clergyman who would live in the city *may* have piety, but *must* have taste, whilst there was often coming, among these, some John the Baptist, wild from the woods, rude, hairy, careless of dress and quite scornful of the etiquette of cities. There was a pilgrim in those days walking in the country who stopped at every door where he hoped to find hearing for his doctrine, which was, Never to give or receive money. He was a poor printer, and explained with simple warmth the belief of himself and five or six young men with whom he agreed in opinion, of the vast mischief of our insidious coin. He thought every one should labor at some necessary product, and as soon as he had made more than enough for himself, were it corn, or paper, or cloth, or boot-jacks, he should give of the commodity to any applicant, and in turn go to his neighbor for any article which he had to spare. Of course we were curious to know how he sped in his experiments on the neighbor, and his anecdotes were interesting, and often highly

creditable. But he had the courage which so stern a return to Arcadian manners required, and had learned to sleep, in cold nights, when the farmer at whose door he knocked declined to give him a bed, on a wagon covered with the buffalo-robe under the shed, — or under the stars, when the farmer denied the shed and the buffalo-robe. I think he persisted for two years in his brave practice, but did not enlarge his church of believers.[1]

These reformers were a new class. Instead of the fiery souls of the Puritans, bent on hanging the Quaker, burning the witch and banishing the Romanist, these were gentle souls, with peaceful and even with genial dispositions, casting sheep's-eyes even on Fourier and his houris. It was a time when the air was full of reform. Robert Owen of Lanark came hither from England in 1845, and read lectures or held conversations wherever he found listeners; the most amiable, sanguine and candid of men. He had not the least doubt that he had hit on a right and perfect socialism, or that all mankind would adopt it. He was then seventy years old, and being asked, "Well, Mr. Owen, who is your disciple? How many men are there possessed of your views who will remain after you are gone,

to put them in practice?" "Not one," was his reply. Robert Owen knew Fourier in his old age. He said that Fourier learned of him all the truth he had; the rest of his system was imagination, and the imagination of a banker. Owen made the best impression by his rare benevolence. His love of men made us forget his "Three Errors." His charitable construction of men and their actions was invariable. He was the better Christian in his controversy with Christians, and he interpreted with great generosity the acts of the "Holy Alliance," and Prince Metternich, with whom the persevering *doctrinaire* had obtained interviews; "Ah," he said, "you may depend on it there are as tender hearts and as much good will to serve men, in palaces, as in colleges."[1]

And truly I honor the generous ideas of the Socialists, the magnificence of their theories and the enthusiasm with which they have been urged. They appeared the inspired men of their time. Mr. Owen preached his doctrine of labor and reward, with the fidelity and devotion of a saint, to the slow ears of his generation. Fourier, almost as wonderful an example of the mathematical mind of France as La Place or Napoleon, turned a truly vast arithmetic to the question of social

misery, and has put men under the obligation which a generous mind always confers, of conceiving magnificent hopes and making great demands as the right of man. He took his measure of that which all should and might enjoy, from no soup-society or charity-concert, but from the refinements of palaces, the wealth of universities and the triumphs of artists. He thought nobly. A man is entitled to pure air, and to the air of good conversation in his bringing up, and not, as we or so many of us, to the poor-smell and musty chambers, cats and fools. Fourier carried a whole French Revolution in his head, and much more. Here was arithmetic on a huge scale. His ciphering goes where ciphering never went before, namely, into stars, atmospheres and animals, and men and women, and classes of every character. It was the most entertaining of French romances, and could not but suggest vast possibilities of reform to the coldest and least sanguine.

We had an opportunity of learning something of these Socialists and their theory, from the indefatigable apostle of the sect in New York, Albert Brisbane.[1] Mr. Brisbane pushed his doctrine with all the force of memory, talent, honest faith and importunacy. As we listened to his

exposition it appeared to us the sublime of mechanical philosophy; for the system was the perfection of arrangement and contrivance. The force of arrangement could no farther go. The merit of the plan was that it was a system; that it had not the partiality and hint-and-fragment character of most popular schemes, but was coherent and comprehensive of facts to a wonderful degree. It was not daunted by distance, or magnitude, or remoteness of any sort, but strode about nature with a giant's step, and skipped no fact, but wove its large Ptolemaic web of cycle and epicycle, of phalanx and phalanstery, with laudable assiduity. Mechanics were pushed so far as fairly to meet spiritualism. One could not but be struck with strange coincidences betwixt Fourier and Swedenborg. Genius hitherto has been shamefully misapplied, a mere trifler. It must now set itself to raise the social condition of man and to redress the disorders of the planet he inhabits. The Desert of Sahara, the Campagna di Roma, the frozen Polar circles, which by their pestilential or hot or cold airs poison the temperate regions, accuse man. Society, concert, coöperation, is the secret of the coming Paradise. By reason of the isolation of men at the present day, all work is drudgery. By concert and the

allowing each laborer to choose his own work, it becomes pleasure. "Attractive Industry" would speedily subdue, by adventurous scientific and persistent tillage, the pestilential tracts; would equalize temperature, give health to the globe and cause the earth to yield "healthy imponderable fluids" to the solar system, as now it yields noxious fluids. The hyæna, the jackal, the gnat, the bug, the flea, were all beneficent parts of the system; the good Fourier knew what those creatures should have been, had not the mould slipped, through the bad state of the atmosphere; caused no doubt by the same vicious imponderable fluids. All these shall be redressed by human culture, and the useful goat and dog and innocent poetical moth, or the wood-tick to consume decomposing wood, shall take their place. It takes sixteen hundred and eighty men to make one Man, complete in all the faculties; that is, to be sure that you have got a good joiner, a good cook, a barber, a poet, a judge, an umbrella-maker, a mayor and alderman, and so on. Your community should consist of two thousand persons, to prevent accidents of omission; and each community should take up six thousand acres of land. Now fancy the earth planted with fifties and hundreds of these pha-

lanxes side by side, — what tillage, what architecture, what refectories, what dormitories, what reading-rooms, what concerts, what lectures, what gardens, what baths! What is not in one will be in another, and many will be within easy distance. Then know you one and all, that Constantinople is the natural capital of the globe. There, in the Golden Horn, will the Arch-Phalanx be established; there will the Omniarch reside. Aladdin and his magician, or the beautiful Scheherezade can alone, in these prosaic times before the sight, describe the material splendors collected there. Poverty shall be abolished; deformity, stupidity and crime shall be no more. Genius, grace, art, shall abound, and it is not to be doubted but that in the reign of "Attractive Industry" all men will speak in blank verse.

Certainly we listened with great pleasure to such gay and magnificent pictures. The ability and earnestness of the advocate and his friends, the comprehensiveness of their theory, its apparent directness of proceeding to the end they would secure, the indignation they felt and uttered in the presence of so much social misery, commanded our attention and respect. It contained so much truth, and promised in the attempts that shall be made to realize it so much

valuable instruction, that we are engaged to observe every step of its progress. Yet in spite of the assurances of its friends that it was new and widely discriminated from all other plans for the regeneration of society, we could not exempt it from the criticism which we apply to so many projects for reform with which the brain of the age teems. Our feeling was that Fourier had skipped no fact but one, namely Life. He treats man as a plastic thing, something that may be put up or down, ripened or retarded, moulded, polished, made into solid or fluid or gas, at the will of the leader; or perhaps as a vegetable, from which, though now a poor crab, a very good peach can by manure and exposure be in time produced, — but skips the faculty of life, which spawns and scorns system and system-makers; which eludes all conditions; which makes or supplants a thousand phalanxes and New Harmonies with each pulsation. There is an order in which in a sound mind the faculties always appear, and which, according to the strength of the individual, they seek to realize in the surrounding world. The value of Fourier's system is that it is a statement of such an order externized, or carried outward into its correspondence in facts. The mistake is that this

particular order and series is to be imposed, by force or preaching and votes, on all men, and carried into rigid execution. But what is true and good must not only be begun by life, but must be conducted to its issues by life. Could not the conceiver of this design have also believed that a similar model lay in every mind, and that the method of each associate might be trusted, as well as that of his particular Committee and General Office, No. 200 Broadway? Nay, that it would be better to say, Let us be lovers and servants of that which is just, and straightway every man becomes a centre of a holy and beneficent republic, which he sees to include all men in its law, like that of Plato, and of Christ. Before such a man the whole world becomes Fourierized or Christized or humanized, and in obedience to his most private being he finds himself, according to his presentiment, though against all sensuous probability, acting in strict concert with all others who followed their private light.

Yet, in a day of small, sour and fierce schemes, one is admonished and cheered by a project of such friendly aims and of such bold and generous proportion; there is an intellectual courage and strength in it which is superior and

commanding; it certifies the presence of so much truth in the theory, and in so far is destined to be fact.

It argued singular courage, the adoption of Fourier's system, to even a limited extent, with his books lying before the world only defended by the thin veil of the French language. The Stoic said, Forbear, Fourier said, Indulge. Fourier was of the opinion of Saint-Evremond; abstinence from pleasure appeared to him a great sin. Fourier was very French indeed.' He labored under a misapprehension of the nature of women. The Fourier marriage was a calculation how to secure the greatest amount of kissing that the infirmity of human constitution admitted. It was false and prurient, full of absurd French superstitions about women; ignorant how serious and how moral their nature always is; how chaste is their organization; how lawful a class.

It is the worst of community that it must inevitably transform into charlatans the leaders, by the endeavor continually to meet the expectation and admiration of this eager crowd of men and women seeking they know not what. Unless he have a Cossack roughness of clearing himself of what belongs not, charlatan he must be.

It was easy to see what must be the fate of this fine system in any serious and comprehensive attempt to set it on foot in this country. As soon as our people got wind of the doctrine of Marriage held by this master, it would fall at once into the hands of a lawless crew who would flock in troops to so fair a game, and, like the dreams of poetic people on the first outbreak of the old French Revolution, so theirs would disappear in a slime of mire and blood.

There is of course to every theory a tendency to run to an extreme, and to forget the limitations. In our free institutions, where every man is at liberty to choose his home and his trade, and all possible modes of working and gaining are open to him, fortunes are easily made by thousands, as in no other country. Then property proves too much for the man, and the men of science, art, intellect, are pretty sure to degenerate into selfish housekeepers, dependent on wine, coffee, furnace-heat, gas-light and fine furniture. Then instantly things swing the other way, and we suddenly find that civilization crowed too soon; that what we bragged as triumphs were treacheries: that we have opened the wrong door and let the enemy into the

castle; that civilization was a mistake; that nothing is so vulgar as a great warehouse of rooms full of furniture and trumpery; that, in the circumstances, the best wisdom were an auction or a fire. Since the foxes and the birds have the right of it, with a warm hole to keep out the weather, and no more, — a pent-house to fend the sun and rain is the house which lays no tax on the owner's time and thoughts, and which he can leave, when the sun is warm, and defy the robber. This was Thoreau's doctrine, who said that the Fourierists had a sense of duty which led them to devote themselves to their second-best. And Thoreau gave in flesh and blood and pertinacious Saxon belief the purest ethics. He was more real and practically believing in them than any of his company, and fortified you at all times with an affirmative experience which refused to be set aside. Thoreau was in his own person a practical answer, almost a refutation, to the theories of the socialists. He required no Phalanx, no Government, no society, almost no memory. He lived extempore from hour to hour, like the birds and the angels; brought every day a new proposition, as revolutionary as that of yesterday, but different: the only man of leisure in his town; and his inde-

pendence made all others look like slaves. He was a good Abbot Samson, and carried a counsel in his breast.' "Again and again I congratulate myself on my so-called poverty, I could not overstate this advantage." "What you call bareness and poverty, is to me simplicity. God could not be unkind to me if he should try. I love best to have each thing in its season only, and enjoy doing without it at all other times. It is the greatest of all advantages to enjoy no advantage at all. I have never got over my surprise that I should have been born into the most estimable place in all the world, and in the very nick of time too." There 's an optimist for you.

I regard these philanthropists as themselves the effects of the age in which we live, and, in common with so many other good facts, the efflorescence of the period, and predicting a good fruit that ripens. They were not the creators they believed themselves, but they were unconscious prophets of a true state of society; one which the tendencies of nature lead unto, one which always establishes itself for the sane soul, though not in that manner in which they paint it; but they were describers of that which is really being done. The large cities are pha-

lansteries ; and the theorists drew all their argument from facts already taking place in our experience. The cheap way is to make every man do what he was born for. One merchant to whom I described the Fourier project, thought it must not only succeed, but that agricultural association must presently fix the price of bread, and drive single farmers into association in self-defence, as the great commercial and manufacturing companies had done. Society in England and in America is trying the experiment again in small pieces, in coöperative associations, in cheap eating-houses, as well as in the economies of club-houses and in cheap reading-rooms.

It chanced that here in one family were two brothers, one a brilliant and fertile inventor, and close by him his own brother, a man of business, who knew how to direct his faculty and make it instantly and permanently lucrative. Why could not the like partnership be formed between the inventor and the man of executive talent everywhere? Each man of thought is surrounded by wiser men than he, if they cannot write as well. Cannot he and they combine? Talents supplement each other. Beaumont and Fletcher and many French novelists have known how to utilize such partnerships. Why

not have a larger one, and with more various members?

Housekeepers say, "There are a thousand things to everything," and if one must study all the strokes to be laid, all the faults to be shunned in a building or work of art, of its keeping, its composition, its site, its color, there would be no end. But the architect, acting under a necessity to build the house for its purpose, finds himself helped, he knows not how, into all these merits of detail, and steering clear, though in the dark, of those dangers which might have shipwrecked him.

BROOK FARM

The West Roxbury Association was formed in 1841, by a society of members, men and women, who bought a farm in West Roxbury, of about two hundred acres, and took possession of the place in April. Mr. George Ripley was the President, and I think Mr. Charles Dana (afterwards well known as one of the editors of the New York Tribune) was the Secretary. Many members took shares by paying money, others held shares by their labor. An old house on the place was enlarged, and three new houses built. William Allen was at first and for some

time the head farmer, and the work was distributed in orderly committees to the men and women. There were many employments more or less lucrative found for, or brought hither by these members, — shoemakers, joiners, sempstresses. They had good scholars among them, and so received pupils for their education. The parents of the children in some instances wished to live there, and were received as boarders. Many persons, attracted by the beauty of the place and the culture and ambition of the community, joined them as boarders, and lived there for years. I think the numbers of this mixed community soon reached eighty or ninety souls.[1]

It was a noble and generous movement in the projectors, to try an experiment of better living. They had the feeling that our ways of living were too conventional and expensive, not allowing each to do what he had a talent for, and not permitting men to combine cultivation of mind and heart with a reasonable amount of daily labor. At the same time, it was an attempt to lift others with themselves, and to share the advantages they should attain, with others now deprived of them.

There was no doubt great variety of character and purpose in the members of the community.

It consisted in the main of young people, — few of middle age, and none old. Those who inspired and organized it were of course persons impatient of the routine, the uniformity, perhaps they would say the squalid contentment of society around them, which was so timid and skeptical of any progress. One would say then that impulse was the rule in the society, without centripetal balance; perhaps it would not be severe to say, intellectual sans-culottism, an impatience of the formal, routinary character of our educational, religious, social and economical life in Massachusetts. Yet there was immense hope in these young people. There was nobleness; there were self-sacrificing victims who compensated for the levity and rashness of their companions. The young people lived a great deal in a short time, and came forth some of them perhaps with shattered constitutions. And a few grave sanitary influences of character were happily there, which, I was assured, were always felt.

George W. Curtis of New York, and his brother, of English Oxford, were members of the family from the first. Theodore Parker, the near neighbor of the farm and the most intimate friend of Mr. Ripley, was a frequent visitor. Mr. Ichabod Morton of Plymouth, a plain man for-

merly engaged through many years in the fisheries with success, eccentric, — with a persevering interest in education, and of a very democratic religion, came and built a house on the farm, and he, or members of his family, continued there to the end. Margaret Fuller, with her joyful conversation and large sympathy, was often a guest, and always in correspondence with her friends. Many ladies, whom to name were to praise, gave character and varied attraction to the place.[1]

In and around Brook Farm, whether as members, boarders or visitors, were many remarkable persons, for character, intellect or accomplishments. I recall one youth of the subtlest mind, I believe I must say the subtlest observer and diviner of character I ever met, living, reading, writing, talking there, perhaps as long as the colony held together; his mind fed and overfed by whatever is exalted in genius, whether in Poetry or Art, in Drama or Music, or in social accomplishment and elegancy; a man of no employment or practical aims, a student and philosopher, who found his daily enjoyment not with the elders or his exact contemporaries so much as with the fine boys who were skating and playing ball or bird-hunting; forming the

closest friendships with such, and finding his delight in the petulant heroism of boys; yet was he the chosen counsellor to whom the guardians would repair on any hitch or difficulty that occurred, and draw from him a wise counsel. A fine, subtle, inward genius, puny in body and habit as a girl, yet with an *ἀρίστη* like a general, never disconcerted. He lived and thought, in 1842, such worlds of life; all hinging on the thought of Being or Reality as opposed to consciousness; hating intellect with the ferocity of a Swedenborg.' He was the Abbé or spiritual father, from his religious bias. His reading lay in Æschylus, Plato, Dante, Calderon, Shakspeare, and in modern novels and romances of merit.' There too was Hawthorne, with his cold yet gentle genius, if he failed to do justice to this temporary home. There was the accomplished Doctor of Music, who has presided over its literature ever since in our metropolis.[2] Rev. William Henry Channing, now of London, was from the first a student of Socialism in France and England, and in perfect sympathy with this experiment. An English baronet, Sir John Caldwell, was a frequent visitor, and more or less directly interested in the leaders and the success.

Hawthorne drew some sketches, not happily,

as I think ; I should rather say, quite unworthy of his genius. No friend who knew Margaret Fuller could recognize her rich and brilliant genius under the dismal mask which the public fancied was meant for her in that disagreeable story.

The Founders of Brook Farm should have this praise, that they made what all people try to make, an agreeable place to live in. All comers, even the most fastidious, found it the pleasantest of residences. It is certain that freedom from household routine, variety of character and talent, variety of work, variety of means of thought and instruction, art, music, poetry, reading, masquerade, did not permit sluggishness or despondency; broke up routine. There is agreement in the testimony that it was, to most of the associates, education ; to many, the most important period of their life, the birth of valued friendships, their first acquaintance with the riches of conversation, their training in behavior. The art of letter-writing, it is said, was immensely cultivated. Letters were always flying not only from house to house, but from room to room. It was a perpetual picnic, a French Revolution in small, an Age of Reason in a patty-pan.

In the American social communities, the gossip found such vent and sway as to become despotic. The institutions were whispering-galleries, in which the adored Saxon privacy was lost. Married women I believe uniformly decided against the community. It was to them like the brassy and lacquered life in hotels. The common school was well enough, but to the common nursery they had grave objections. Eggs might be hatched in ovens, but the hen on her own account much preferred the old way. A hen without her chickens was but half a hen.

It was a curious experience of the patrons and leaders of this noted community, in which the agreement with many parties was that they should give so many hours of instruction in mathematics, in music, in moral and intellectual philosophy, and so forth, — that in every instance the newcomers showed themselves keenly alive to the advantages of the society, and were sure to avail themselves of every means of instruction; their knowledge was increased, their manners refined, — but they became in that proportion averse to labor, and were charged by the heads of the departments with a certain indolence and selfishness.

In practice it is always found that virtue is

occasional, spotty, and not linear or cubic. Good people are as bad as rogues if steady performance is claimed; the conscience of the conscientious runs in veins, and the most punctilious in some particulars are latitudinarian in others. It was very gently said that people on whom beforehand all persons would put the utmost reliance were not responsible. They saw the necessity that the work must be done, and did it not, and it of course fell to be done by the few religious workers. No doubt there was in many a certain strength drawn from the fury of dissent. Thus Mr. Ripley told Theodore Parker, "There is your accomplished friend ——: he would hoe corn all Sunday if I would let him, but all Massachusetts could not make him do it on Monday."

Of course every visitor found that there was a comic side to this Paradise of shepherds and shepherdesses. There was a stove in every chamber, and every one might burn as much wood as he or she would saw. The ladies took cold on washing-day; so it was ordained that the gentlemen-shepherds should wring and hang out clothes; which they punctually did. And it would sometimes occur that when they danced in the evening, clothespins dropped plentifully

from their pockets. The country members naturally were surprised to observe that one man ploughed all day and one looked out of the window all day, and perhaps drew his picture, and both received at night the same wages. One would meet also some modest pride in their advanced condition, signified by a frequent phrase, "Before we came out of civilization."

The question which occurs to you had occurred much earlier to Fourier: "How in this charming Elysium is the dirty work to be done?" And long ago Fourier had exclaimed, "Ah! I have it," and jumped with joy. "Don't you see," he cried, "that nothing so delights the young Caucasian child as dirt? See the mud-pies that all children will make if you will let them. See how much more joy they find in pouring their pudding on the table-cloth than into their beautiful mouths. The children from six to eight, organized into companies with flags and uniforms, shall do this last function of civilization."

In Brook Farm was this peculiarity, that there was no head. In every family is the father; in every factory, a foreman; in a shop, a master; in a boat, the skipper; but in this Farm, no authority; each was master or mistress of his or

her actions; happy, hapless anarchists. They expressed, after much perilous experience, the conviction that plain dealing was the best defence of manners and moral between the sexes. People cannot live together in any but necessary ways. The only candidates who will present themselves will be those who have tried the experiment of independence and ambition, and have failed; and none others will barter for the most comfortable equality the chance of superiority. Then all communities have quarrelled. Few people can live together on their merits. There must be kindred, or mutual economy, or a common interest in their business, or other external tie.

The society at Brook Farm existed, I think, about six or seven years, and then broke up, the Farm was sold, and I believe all the partners came out with pecuniary loss. Some of them had spent on it the accumulations of years. I suppose they all, at the moment, regarded it as a failure. I do not think they can so regard it now, but probably as an important chapter in their experience which has been of lifelong value. What knowledge of themselves and of each other, what various practical wisdom, what personal power, what studies of character, what

accumulated culture many of the members owed to it! What mutual measure they took of each other! It was a close union, like that in a ship's cabin, of clergymen, young collegians, merchants, mechanics, farmers' sons and daughters, with men and women of rare opportunities and delicate culture, yet assembled there by a sentiment which all shared, some of them hotly shared, of the honesty of a life of labor and of the beauty of a life of humanity. The yeoman saw refined manners in persons who were his friends; and the lady or the romantic scholar saw the continuous strength and faculty in people who would have disgusted them but that these powers were now spent in the direction of their own theory of life.

I recall these few selected facts, none of them of much independent interest, but symptomatic of the times and country. I please myself with the thought that our American mind is not now eccentric or rude in its strength, but is beginning to show a quiet power, drawn from wide and abundant sources, proper to a Continent and to an educated people. If I have owed much to the special influences I have indicated, I am not less aware of that excellent and increasing circle of masters in arts and in song and in science, who

cheer the intellect of our cities and this country to-day, — whose genius is not a lucky accident, but normal, and with broad foundation of culture, and so inspires the hope of steady strength advancing on itself, and a day without night.'

XIII

THE CHARDON STREET CONVENTION

THE CHARDON STREET CONVENTION

IN the month of November, 1840, a Convention of Friends of Universal Reform assembled in the Chardon Street Chapel in Boston, in obedience to a call in the newspapers, signed by a few individuals, inviting all persons to a public discussion of the institutions of the Sabbath, the Church and the Ministry. The Convention organized itself by the choice of Edmund Quincy as Moderator, spent three days in the consideration of the Sabbath, and adjourned to a day in March of the following year, for the discussion of the second topic. In March, accordingly, a three-days' session was holden in the same place, on the subject of the Church, and a third meeting fixed for the following November, which was accordingly holden; and the Convention debated, for three days again, the remaining subject of the Priesthood. This Convention never printed any report of its deliberations, nor pretended to arrive at any result by the expression of its sense in formal resolutions; — the professed objects of those persons who felt the greatest interest in its meetings being

simply the elucidation of truth through free discussion. The daily newspapers reported, at the time, brief sketches of the course of proceedings, and the remarks of the principal speakers. These meetings attracted a great deal of public attention, and were spoken of in different circles in every note of hope, of sympathy, of joy, of alarm, of abhorrence and of merriment. The composition of the assembly was rich and various. The singularity and latitude of the summons drew together, from all parts of New England and also from the Middle States, men of every shade of opinion from the straitest orthodoxy to the wildest heresy, and many persons whose church was a church of one member only. A great variety of dialect and of costume was noticed; a great deal of confusion, eccentricity and freak appeared, as well as of zeal and enthusiasm. If the assembly was disorderly, it was picturesque. Madmen, madwomen, men with beards, Dunkers, Muggletonians, Come-outers, Groaners, Agrarians, Seventh-day Baptists, Quakers, Abolitionists, Calvinists, Unitarians and Philosophers, — all came successively to the top, and seized their moment, if not their hour, wherein to chide, or pray, or preach, or protest. The faces were a study. The most daring inno-

vators and the champions-until-death of the old cause sat side by side. The still-living merit of the oldest New England families, glowing yet after several generations, encountered the founders of families, fresh merit, emerging, and expanding the brows to a new breadth, and lighting a clownish face with sacred fire. The assembly was characterized by the predominance of a certain plain, sylvan strength and earnestness, whilst many of the most intellectual and cultivated persons attended its councils. Dr. Channing, Edward Taylor, Bronson Alcott, Mr. Garrison, Mr. May, Theodore Parker, H. C. Wright, Dr. Osgood, William Adams, Edward Palmer, Jones Very, Maria W. Chapman and many other persons of a mystical or sectarian or philanthropic renown, were present, and some of them participant. And there was no want of female speakers; Mrs. Little and Mrs. Lucy Sessions took a pleasing and memorable part in the debate, and that flea of Conventions, Mrs. Abigail Folsom, was but too ready with her interminable scroll. If there was not parliamentary order, there was life, and the assurance of that constitutional love for religion and religious liberty which, in all periods, characterizes the inhabitants of this part of America.

There was a great deal of wearisome speaking in each of those three-days' sessions, but relieved by signal passages of pure eloquence, by much vigor of thought, and especially by the exhibition of character, and by the victories of character. These men and women were in search of something better and more satisfying than a vote or a definition, and they found what they sought, or the pledge of it, in the attitude taken by individuals of their number of resistance to the insane routine of parliamentary usage; in the lofty reliance on principles, and the prophetic dignity and transfiguration which accompanies, even amidst opposition and ridicule, a man whose mind is made up to obey the great inward Commander, and who does not anticipate his own action, but awaits confidently the new emergency for the new counsel.[1] By no means the least value of this Convention, in our eye, was the scope it gave to the genius of Mr. Alcott, and not its least instructive lesson was the gradual but sure ascendency of his spirit, in spite of the incredulity and derision with which he is at first received, and in spite, we might add, of his own failures.[2] Moreover, although no decision was had, and no action taken on all the great points mooted in the discussion, yet the

Convention brought together many remarkable persons, face to face, and gave occasion to memorable interviews and conversations, in the hall, in the lobbies or around the doors.[1]

XIV

EZRA RIPLEY, D. D.

We love the venerable house
  Our fathers built to God:
In Heaven are kept their grateful vows,
  Their dust endears the sod.

From humble tenements around
  Came up the pensive train,
And in the church a blessing found
  That filled their homes again.

EZRA RIPLEY, D. D.

EZRA RIPLEY was born May 1, 1751 (O. S.), at Woodstock, Connecticut. He was the fifth of the nineteen children of Noah and Lydia (Kent) Ripley. Seventeen of these nineteen children married, and it is stated that the mother died leaving nineteen children, one hundred and two grandchildren and ninety-six great-grandchildren. The father was born at Hingham, on the farm purchased by his ancestor, William Ripley, of England, at the first settlement of the town; which farm has been occupied by seven or eight generations. Ezra Ripley followed the business of farming till sixteen years of age, when his father wished him to be qualified to teach a grammar school, not thinking himself able to send one son to college without injury to his other children. With this view, the father agreed with the late Rev. Dr. Forbes of Gloucester, then minister of North Brookfield, to fit Ezra for college by the time he should be twenty-one years of age, and to have him labor during the time sufficiently to pay for his instruction, clothing and books.

But, when fitted for college, the son could

not be contented with teaching, which he had tried the preceding winter. He had early manifested a desire for learning, and could not be satisfied without a public education. Always inclined to notice ministers, and frequently attempting, when only five or six years old, to imitate them by preaching, now that he had become a professor of religion he had an ardent desire to be a preacher of the gospel. He had to encounter great difficulties, but, through a kind providence and the patronage of Dr. Forbes, he entered Harvard University, July, 1772. The commencement of the Revolutionary War greatly interrupted his education at college. In 1775, in his senior year, the college was removed from Cambridge to this town.[1] The studies were much broken up. Many of the students entered the army, and the class never returned to Cambridge. There were an unusually large number of distinguished men in this class of 1776: Christopher Gore, Governor of Massachusetts and Senator in Congress; Samuel Sewall, Chief Justice of Massachusetts; George Thacher, Judge of the Supreme Court; Royall Tyler, Chief Justice of Vermont; and the late learned Dr. Prince, of Salem.

Mr. Ripley was ordained minister of Concord

November 7, 1778. He married, November 16, 1780, Mrs. Phebe (Bliss) Emerson, then a widow of thirty-nine, with five children.' They had three children: Sarah, born August 18, 1781; Samuel, born May 11, 1783; Daniel Bliss, born August 1, 1784. He died September 21, 1841.

To these facts, gathered chiefly from his own diary, and stated nearly in his own words, I can only add a few traits from memory.

He was identified with the ideas and forms of the New England Church, which expired about the same time with him, so that he and his coevals seemed the rear guard of the great camp and army of the Puritans, which, however in its last days declining into formalism, in the heyday of its strength had planted and liberated America. It was a pity that his old meeting-house should have been modernized in his time. I am sure all who remember both will associate his form with whatever was grave and droll in the old, cold, unpainted, uncarpeted, square-pewed meeting-house, with its four iron-gray deacons in their little box under the pulpit, — with Watts's hymns, with long prayers, rich with the diction of ages; and not less with the report like musketry from the movable seats. He and his

contemporaries, the old New England clergy, were believers in what is called a particular providence, — certainly, as they held it, a very particular providence, — following the narrowness of King David and the Jews, who thought the universe existed only or mainly for their church and congregation. Perhaps I cannot better illustrate this tendency than by citing a record from the diary of the father of his predecessor,[1] the minister of Malden, written in the blank leaves of the almanac for the year 1735. The minister writes against January 31st: "Bought a shay for 27 pounds, 10 shillings. The Lord grant it may be a comfort and blessing to my family." In March following he notes: "Had a safe and comfortable journey to York." But April 24th, we find: "Shay overturned, with my wife and I in it, yet neither of us much hurt. Blessed be our gracious Preserver. Part of the shay, as it lay upon one side, went over my wife, and yet she was scarcely anything hurt. How wonderful the preservation." Then again, May 5th: "Went to the beach with three of the children. The beast, being frightened when we were all out of the shay, overturned and broke it. I desire (I hope I desire it) that the Lord would teach me suitably to resent this Provi-

dence,' to make suitable remarks on it, and to be suitably affected with it. Have I done well to get me a shay? Have I not been proud or too fond of this convenience? Do I exercise the faith in the Divine care and protection which I ought to do? Should I not be more in my study and less fond of diversion? Do I not withhold more than is meet from pious and charitable uses?" Well, on 15th May we have this: "Shay brought home; mending cost thirty shillings. Favored in this respect beyond expectation." 16th May: "My wife and I rode together to Rumney Marsh. The beast frighted several times." And at last we have this record, June 4th: "Disposed of my shay to Rev. Mr. White."

The same faith made what was strong and what was weak in Dr. Ripley and his associates. He was a perfectly sincere man, punctual, severe, but just and charitable, and if he made his forms a strait-jacket to others, he wore the same himself all his years. Trained in this church, and very well qualified by his natural talent to work in it, it was never out of his mind. He looked at every person and thing from the parochial point of view. I remember, when a boy, driving about Concord with him, and in passing

an excellent citizen. Your grandfather followed him, and was a virtuous man. Now your father is to be carried to his grave, full of labors and virtues. There is none of that large family left but you, and it rests with you to bear up the good name and usefulness of your ancestors. If you fail,— 'Ichabod, the glory is departed.' Let us pray." Right manly he was, and the manly thing he could always say. I can remember a little speech he made to me, when the last tie of blood which held me and my brothers to his house was broken by the death of his daughter. He said, on parting, "I wish you and your brothers to come to this house as you have always done. You will not like to be excluded; I shall not like to be neglected."

When "Put" Merriam, after his release from the state prison, had the effrontery to call on the Doctor as an old acquaintance, in the midst of general conversation Mr. Frost came in, and the Doctor presently said, "Mr. Merriam, my brother and colleague, Mr. Frost, has come to take tea with me. I regret very much the causes (which you know very well) which make it impossible for me to ask you to stay and break bread with us." With the Doctor's views it was a matter of religion to say thus much. He had

a reverence and love of society, and the patient, continuing courtesy, carrying out every respectful attention to the end, which marks what is called the manners of the old school. His hospitality obeyed Charles Lamb's rule, and "ran fine to the last." His partiality for ladies was always strong, and was by no means abated by time. He claimed privilege of years, was much addicted to kissing; spared neither maid, wife nor widow, and, as a lady thus favored remarked to me, "seemed as if he was going to make a meal of you."

He was very credulous, and as he was no reader of books or journals, he knew nothing beyond the columns of his weekly religious newspaper, the tracts of his sect, and perhaps the Middlesex Yeoman. He was the easy dupe of any tonguey agent, whether colonizationist or anti-papist, or charlatan of iron combs, or tractors, or phrenology, or magnetism, who went by. At the time when Jack Downing's letters were in every paper, he repeated to me at table some of the particulars of that gentleman's intimacy with General Jackson, in a manner that betrayed to me at once that he took the whole for fact. To undeceive him, I hastened to recall some particulars to show the absurdity of the thing, as the

each house he told the story of the family that lived in it, and especially he gave me anecdotes of the nine church members who had made a division in the church in the time of his predecessor, and showed me how every one of the nine had come to bad fortune or to a bad end. His prayers for rain and against the lightning, "that it may not lick up our spirits;" and for good weather; and against sickness and insanity; "that we have not been tossed to and fro until the dawning of the day; that we have not been a terror to ourselves and others," — are well remembered, and his own entire faith that these petitions were not to be overlooked, and were entitled to a favorable answer. Some of those around me will remember one occasion of severe drought in this vicinity, when the late Rev. Mr. Goodwin offered to relieve the Doctor of the duty of leading in prayer; but the Doctor suddenly remembering the season, rejected his offer with some humor, as with an air that said to all the congregation, "This is no time for you young Cambridge men; the affair, sir, is getting serious. I will pray myself." [1] One August afternoon, when I was in his hayfield helping him with his man to rake up his hay, I well remember his pleading, almost reproachful looks at the

sky, when the thunder-gust was coming up to spoil his hay. He raked very fast, then looked at the cloud, and said, "We are in the Lord's hand; mind your rake, George! We are in the Lord's hand;" and seemed to say, "You know me; this field is mine, — Dr. Ripley's, — thine own servant!" [1]

He used to tell the story of one of his old friends, the minister of Sudbury, who, being at the Thursday lecture in Boston, heard the officiating clergyman praying for rain. As soon as the service was over, he went to the petitioner, and said, "You Boston ministers, as soon as a tulip wilts under your windows, go to church and pray for rain, until all Concord and Sudbury are under water." I once rode with him to a house at Nine Acre Corner to attend the funeral of the father of a family. He mentioned to me on the way his fears that the oldest son, who was now to succeed to the farm, was becoming intemperate. We presently arrived, and the Doctor addressed each of the mourners separately: "Sir, I condole with you." "Madam, I condole with you." "Sir, I knew your great-grandfather. When I came to this town, your great-grandfather was a substantial farmer in this very place, a member of the church, and

Major and the President going out skating on the Potomac, etc. "Why," said the Doctor with perfect faith, "it was a bright moonlight night;" and I am not sure that he did not die in the belief in the reality of Major Downing. Like other credulous men, he was opinionative, and, as I well remember, a great browbeater of the poor old fathers who still survived from the 19th of April, to the end that they should testify to his history as he had written it.

He was a man so kind and sympathetic, his character was so transparent, and his merits so intelligible to all observers, that he was very justly appreciated in this community. He was a natural gentleman, no dandy, but courtly, hospitable, manly and public-spirited; his nature social, his house open to all men. We remember the remark made by the old farmer who used to travel hither from Maine, that no horse from the Eastern country would go by the Doctor's gate. Travellers from the West and North and South bear the like testimony. His brow was serene and open to his visitor, for he loved men, and he had no studies, no occupations, which company could interrupt. His friends were his study, and to see them loosened his talents and his tongue. In his house dwelt order and

prudence and plenty. There was no waste and no stint. He was open-handed and just and generous. Ingratitude and meanness in his beneficiaries did not wear out his compassion; he bore the insult, and the next day his basket for the beggar, his horse and chaise for the cripple, were at their door. Though he knew the value of a dollar as well as another man, yet he loved to buy dearer and sell cheaper than others. He subscribed to all charities, and it is no reflection on others to say that he was the most public-spirited man in the town. The late Dr. Gardiner, in a funeral sermon on some parishioner whose virtues did not readily come to mind, honestly said, "He was good at fires." Dr. Ripley had many virtues, and yet all will remember that even in his old age, if the firebell was rung, he was instantly on horseback with his buckets, and bag.'

He showed even in his fireside discourse traits of that pertinency and judgment, softening ever and anon into elegancy, which make the distinction of the scholar, and which, under better discipline, might have ripened into a Bentley or a Porson. He had a foresight, when he opened his mouth, of all that he would say, and he marched straight to the conclusion. In debate, in the

vestry of the Lyceum, the structure of his sentences was admirable; so neat, so natural, so terse, his words fell like stones; and often, though quite unconscious of it, his speech was a satire on the loose, voluminous, draggle-tail periods of other speakers. He sat down when he had done. A man of anecdote, his talk in the parlor was chiefly narrative. We remember the remark of a gentleman who listened with much delight to his conversation at the time when the Doctor was preparing to go to Baltimore and Washington, that "a man who could tell a story so well was company for kings and John Quincy Adams." [1]

Sage and savage strove harder in him than in any of my acquaintances, each getting the mastery by turns, and pretty sudden turns: "Save us from the extremity of cold and these violent sudden changes." "The society will meet after the Lyceum, as it is difficult to bring people together in the evening, — and no moon." "Mr. N. F. is dead, and I expect to hear of the death of Mr. B. It is cruel to separate old people from their wives in this cold weather."

With a very limited acquaintance with books, his knowledge was an external experience, an Indian wisdom, the observation of such facts as country life for nearly a century could supply.

He watched with interest the garden, the field, the orchard, the house and the barn, horse, cow, sheep and dog, and all the common objects that engage the thought of the farmer. He kept his eye on the horizon, and knew the weather like a sea-captain. The usual experiences of men, birth, marriage, sickness, death, burial; the common temptations; the common ambitions; — he studied them all, and sympathized so well in these that he was excellent company and counsel to all, even the most humble and ignorant. With extraordinary states of mind, with states of enthusiasm or enlarged speculation, he had no sympathy, and pretended to none. He was sincere, and kept to his point, and his mark was never remote. His conversation was strictly personal and apt to the party and the occasion. An eminent skill he had in saying difficult and unspeakable things; in delivering to a man or a woman that which all their other friends had abstained from saying, in uncovering the bandage from a sore place, and applying the surgeon's knife with a truly surgical spirit. Was a man a sot, or a spendthrift, or too long time a bachelor, or suspected of some hidden crime, or had he quarrelled with his wife, or collared his father, or was there any cloud or suspicious circumstances in his

behavior, the good pastor knew his way straight to that point, believing himself entitled to a full explanation, and whatever relief to the conscience of both parties plain speech could effect was sure to be procured. In all such passages he justified himself to the conscience, and commonly to the love, of the persons concerned. He was the more competent to these searching discourses from his knowledge of family history. He knew everybody's grandfather, and seemed to address each person rather as the representative of his house and name, than as an individual. In him have perished more local and personal anecdotes of this village and vicinity than are possessed by any survivor. This intimate knowledge of families, and this skill of speech, and still more, his sympathy, made him incomparable in his parochial visits, and in his exhortations and prayers. He gave himself up to his feelings, and said on the instant the best things in the world. Many and many a felicity he had in his prayer, now forever lost, which defied all the rules of all the rhetoricians. He did not know when he was good in prayer or sermon, for he had no literature and no art; but he believed, and therefore spoke.[1] He was eminently loyal in his nature, and not fond of adventure or innovation. By

education, and still more by temperament, he was engaged to the old forms of the New England Church. Not speculative, but affectionate; devout, but with an extreme love of order, he adopted heartily, though in its mildest form, the creed and catechism of the fathers, and appeared a modern Israelite in his attachment to the Hebrew history and faith. He was a man very easy to read, for his whole life and conversation were consistent. All his opinions and actions might be securely predicted by a good observer on short acquaintance. My classmate at Cambridge, Frederick King, told me from Governor Gore, who was the Doctor's classmate, that in college he was called Holy Ripley.

And now, in his old age, when all the antique Hebraism and its customs are passing away, it is fit that he too should depart, — most fit that in the fall of laws a loyal man should die.'

XV

MARY MOODY EMERSON

The yesterday doth never smile,
To-day goes drudging through the while,
Yet in the name of Godhead, I
The morrow front and can defy;
Though I am weak, yet God, when prayed,
Cannot withhold his conquering aid.
Ah me! it was my childhood's thought,
If He should make my web a blot
On life's fair picture of delight,
My heart's content would find it right.
But O, these waves and leaves, —
When happy, stoic Nature grieves, —
No human speech so beautiful
As their murmurs, mine to lull.
On this altar God hath built
I lay my vanity and guilt;
Nor me can Hope or Passion urge,
Hearing as now the lofty dirge
Which blasts of Northern mountains hymn,
Nature's funeral high and dim, —
Sable pageantry of clouds,
Mourning summer laid in shrouds.
Many a day shall dawn and die,
Many an angel wander by,
And passing, light my sunken turf,
Moist perhaps by ocean surf,

Forgotten amid splendid tombs,
Yet wreathed and hid by summer blooms.
On earth I dream; — I die to be:
Time! shake not thy bald head at me.
I challenge thee to hurry past,
Or for my turn to fly too fast.

"She is of too high a mind and dignity not only to seek, but almost to wish, the friendship of any creature. They whom she is pleased to choose are such as are of the most eminent condition both for power and employment, — not with any design towards her own particular, either of advantage or curiosity, but her nature values fortunate persons. She prefers the conversation of men to that of women; not but she can talk on the fashions with her female friends, but she is too soon sensible that she can set them as she wills; that preëminence shortens all equality. She converses with those who are most distinguished for their conversational powers. Of Love freely will she discourse, listen to all its faults and mark its power: and will take a deep interest for persons of celebrity."

[Lucy Percy, Countess of Carlisle, the friend of Strafford and of Pym, is thus described by Sir Toby Matthews.]

MARY MOODY EMERSON

I WISH to meet the invitation with which the ladies have honored me by offering them a portrait of real life. It is a representative life, such as could hardly have appeared out of New England; of an age now past, and of which I think no types survive. Perhaps I deceive myself and overestimate its interest. It has to me a value like that which many readers find in Madame Guyon, in Rahel, in Eugénie de Guérin, but it is purely original and hardly admits of a duplicate. Then it is a fruit of Calvinism and New England, and marks the precise time when the power of the old creed yielded to the influence of modern science and humanity.

I have found that I could only bring you this portrait by selections from the diary of my heroine, premising a sketch of her time and place. I report some of the thoughts and soliloquies of a country girl, poor, solitary, — 'a goody' as she called herself, — growing from youth to age amid slender opportunities and usually very humble company.

Mary Moody Emerson was born just before the outbreak of the Revolution. When intro-

duced to Lafayette at Portland, she told him that she was "in arms" at the Concord Fight. Her father, the minister of Concord, a warm patriot in 1775, went as a chaplain to the American army at Ticonderoga: he carried his infant daughter, before he went, to his mother in Malden and told her to keep the child until he returned. He died at Rutland, Vermont, of army-fever, the next year, and Mary remained at Malden with her grandmother, and, after her death, with her father's sister, in whose house she grew up, rarely seeing her brothers and sisters in Concord. This aunt and her husband lived on a farm, were getting old, and the husband a shiftless, easy man. There was plenty of work for the little niece to do day by day, and not always bread enough in the house.

One of her tasks, it appears, was to watch for the approach of the deputy-sheriff, who might come to confiscate the spoons or arrest the uncle for debt. Later, another aunt, who had become insane, was brought hither to end her days. More and sadder work for this young girl. She had no companions, lived in entire solitude with these old people, very rarely cheered by short visits from her brothers and sisters. Her mother had married again, — married the minister who suc-

ceeded her husband in the parish at Concord [Dr. Ezra Ripley], and had now a young family growing up around her.

Her aunt became strongly attached to Mary, and persuaded the family to give the child up to her as a daughter, on some terms embracing a care of her future interests. She would leave the farm to her by will. This promise was kept; she came into possession of the property many years after, and her dealings with it gave her no small trouble, though they give much piquancy to her letters in after years. Finally it was sold, and its price invested in a share of a farm in Maine, where she lived as a boarder with her sister, for many years. It was in a picturesque country, within sight of the White Mountains, with a little lake in front at the foot of a high hill called Bear Mountain. Not far from the house was a brook running over a granite floor like the Franconia Flume, and noble forests around. Every word she writes about this farm ("Elm Vale," Waterford), her dealings and vexations about it, her joys and raptures of religion and Nature, interest like a romance, and to those who may hereafter read her letters, will make its obscure acres amiable.

In Malden she lived through all her youth

and early womanhood, with the habit of visiting the families of her brothers and sisters on any necessity of theirs. Her good will to serve in time of sickness or of pressure was known to them, and promptly claimed, and her attachment to the youths and maidens growing up in those families was secure for any trait of talent or of character. Her sympathy for young people who pleased her was almost passionate, and was sure to make her arrival in each house a holiday.'

Her early reading was Milton, Young, Akenside, Samuel Clarke, Jonathan Edwards, and always the Bible. Later, Plato, Plotinus, Marcus Antoninus, Stewart, Coleridge, Cousin, Herder, Locke, Madame De Staël, Channing, Mackintosh, Byron. Nobody can read in her manuscript, or recall the conversation of old-school people, without seeing that Milton and Young had a religious authority in their mind, and nowise the slight, merely entertaining quality of modern bards. And Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, — how venerable and organic as Nature they are in her mind! What a subject is her mind and life for the finest novel! When I read Dante, the other day, and his paraphrases to signify with more adequateness Christ or Jehovah, whom do you

think I was reminded of? Whom but Mary Emerson and her eloquent theology? She had a deep sympathy with genius. When it was unhallowed, as in Byron, she had none the less, whilst she deplored and affected to denounce him. But she adored it when ennobled by character. She liked to notice that the greatest geniuses have died ignorant of their power and influence. She wished you to scorn to shine. "My opinion," she writes, [is] "that a mind like Byron's would never be satisfied with modern Unitarianism, — that the fiery depths of Calvinism, its high and mysterious elections to eternal bliss, beyond angels, and all its attendant wonders would have alone been fitted to fix his imagination." [1]

Her wit was so fertile, and only used to strike, that she never used it for display, any more than a wasp would parade his sting. It was ever the will and not the phrase that concerned her. Yet certain expressions, when they marked a memorable state of mind in her experience, recurred to her afterwards, and she would vindicate herself as having said to Dr. Ripley or Uncle Lincoln [Ripley] so and so, at such a period of her life. But they were intensely true when first spoken. All her language was happy, but

inimitable, unattainable by talent, as if caught from some dream. She calls herself "the puny pilgrim, whose sole talent is sympathy." "I like that kind of apathy that is a triumph to overset."

She writes to her nephew Charles Emerson, in 1833: "I could never have adorned the garden. If I had been in aught but dreary deserts, I should have idolized my friends, despised the world and been haughty. I never expected connections and matrimony. My taste was formed in romance, and I knew I was not destined to please. I love God and his creation as I never else could. I scarcely feel the sympathies of this life enough to agitate the pool. This in general, one case or so excepted, and even this is a relation to God through you. 'T was so in my happiest early days, when you were at my side."

Destitution is the Muse of her genius, — Destitution and Death. I used to propose that her epitaph should be: "Here lies the angel of Death." And wonderfully as she varies and poetically repeats that image in every page and day, yet not less fondly and sublimely she returns to the other, — the grandeur of humility and privation, as thus: "The chief witness which

I have had of a Godlike principle of action and feeling is in the disinterested joy felt in others' superiority. For the love of superior virtue is mine own gift from God." "Where were thine own intellect if others had not lived?"

She had many acquaintances among the notables of the time; and now and then in her migrations from town to town in Maine and Massachusetts, in search of a new boarding-place, discovered some preacher with sense or piety, or both. For on her arrival at any new home she was likely to steer first to the minister's house and pray his wife to take a boarder; and as the minister found quickly that she knew all his books and many more, and made shrewd guesses at his character and possibilities, she would easily rouse his curiosity, as a person who could read his secret and tell him his fortune.

She delighted in success, in youth, in beauty, in genius, in manners. When she met a young person who interested her, she made herself acquainted and intimate with him or her at once, by sympathy, by flattery, by raillery, by anecdotes, by wit, by rebuke, and stormed the castle. None but was attracted or piqued by her interest and wit and wide acquaintance with books and with eminent names. She said she gave herself

full swing in these sudden intimacies, for she knew she should disgust them soon, and resolved to have their best hours. "Society is shrewd to detect those who do not belong to her train, and seldom wastes her attentions." She surprised, attracted, chided and denounced her companion by turns, and pretty rapid turns. But no intelligent youth or maiden could have once met her without remembering her with interest, and learning something of value. Scorn trifles, lift your aims: do what you are afraid to do: sublimity of character must come from sublimity of motive: these were the lessons which were urged with vivacity, in ever new language. But if her companion was dull, her impatience knew no bounds. She tired presently of dull conversations, and asked to be read to, and so disposed of the visitor. If the voice or the reading tired her, she would ask the friend if he or she would do an errand for her, and so dismiss them. If her companion were a little ambitious, and asked her opinions on books or matters on which she did not wish rude hands laid, she did not hesitate to stop the intruder with "How 's your cat, Mrs. Tenner?"

"I was disappointed," she writes, "in finding my little Calvinist no companion, a cold little

thing who lives in society alone, and is looked up to as a specimen of genius. I performed a mission in secretly undermining his vanity, or trying to. Alas! never done but by mortifying affliction." From the country she writes to her sister in town, "You cannot help saying that my epistle is a striking specimen of egotism. To which I can only answer that, in the country, we converse so much more with ourselves, that we are almost led to forget everybody else. The very sound of your bells and the rattling of the carriages have a tendency to divert selfishness." "This seems a world rather of trying each others' dispositions than of enjoying each others' virtues."

She had the misfortune of spinning with a greater velocity than any of the other tops. She would tear into the chaise or out of it, into the house or out of it, into the conversation, into the thought, into the character of the stranger, — disdaining all the graduation by which her fellows time their steps: and though she might do very happily in a planet where others moved with the like velocity, she was offended here by the phlegm of all her fellow creatures, and disgusted them by her impatience. She could keep step with no human being. Her nephew [C.

C. E.] wrote of her: "I am glad the friendship with Aunt Mary is ripening. As by seeing a high tragedy, reading a true poem, or a novel like Corinne, so, by society with her, one's mind is electrified and purged. She is no statute-book of practical commandments, nor orderly digest of any system of philosophy, divine or human, but a Bible, miscellaneous in its parts, but one in its spirit, wherein are sentences of condemnation, promises and covenants of love that make foolish the wisdom of the world with the power of God."

Our Delphian was fantastic enough, Heaven knows, yet could always be tamed by large and sincere conversation. Was there thought and eloquence, she would listen like a child. Her aspiration and prayer would begin, and the whim and petulance in which by diseased habit she had grown to indulge without suspecting it, was burned up in the glow of her pure and poetic spirit, which dearly loved the Infinite.

She writes: "August, 1847: Vale. — My oddities were never designed — effect of an uncalculating constitution, at first, then through isolation; and as to dress, from duty. To be singular of choice, without singular talents and virtues, is as ridiculous as ungrateful." "It is

so universal with all classes to avoid contact with me that I blame none. The fact has generally increased piety and self-love." "As a traveller enters some fine palace and finds all the doors closed, and he only allowed the use of some avenues and passages, so have I wandered from the cradle over the apartments of social affections, or the cabinets of natural or moral philosophy, the recesses of ancient and modern lore. All say — Forbear to enter the pales of the initiated by birth, wealth, talents and patronage. I submit with delight, for it is the echo of a decree from above; and from the highway hedges where I get lodging, and from the rays which burst forth when the crowd are entering these noble saloons, whilst I stand in the doors, I get a pleasing vision which is an earnest of the interminable skies where the mansions are prepared for the poor." [1]

"To live to give pain rather than pleasure (the latter so delicious) seems the spider-like necessity of my being on earth, and I have gone on my queer way with joy, saying, 'Shall the clay interrogate?' But in every actual case, 't is hard, and we lose sight of the first necessity, — here too amid works red with default in all great and grand and infinite aims. Yet with intentions

disinterested, though uncontrolled by proper reverence for others."

When Mrs. Thoreau called on her one day, wearing pink ribbons, she shut her eyes, and so conversed with her for a time. By and by she said, "Mrs. Thoreau, I don't know whether you have observed that my eyes are shut." "Yes, Madam, I have observed it." "Perhaps you would like to know the reasons?" "Yes, I should." "I don't like to see a person of your age guilty of such levity in her dress."

When her cherished favorite, Elizabeth Hoar, was at the Vale, and had gone out to walk in the forest with Hannah, her niece, Aunt Mary feared they were lost, and found a man in the next house and begged him to go and look for them. The man went and returned saying that he could not find them. "Go and cry, 'Elizabeth!'" The man rather declined this service, as he did not know Miss Hoar. She was highly offended, and exclaimed, "God has given you a voice that you might use it in the service of your fellow creatures. Go instantly and call 'Elizabeth' till you find them." The man went immediately, and did as he was bid, and having found them apologized for calling thus, by telling what Miss Emerson had said to him.

When some ladies of my acquaintance by an unusual chance found themselves in her neighborhood and visited her, I told them that she was no whistle that every mouth could play on, but a quite clannish instrument, a pibroch, for example, from which none but a native Highlander could draw music.

In her solitude of twenty years, with fewest books and those only sermons, and a copy of Paradise Lost, without covers or title-page, so that later, when she heard much of Milton and sought his work, she found it was her very book which she knew so well, — she was driven to find Nature her companion and solace. She speaks of "her attempts in Malden, to wake up the soul amid the dreary scenes of monotonous Sabbaths, when Nature looked like a pulpit."

"Malden, November 15th, 1805. — What a rich day, so fully occupied in pursuing truth that I scorned to touch a novel which for so many years I have wanted. How insipid is fiction to a mind touched with immortal views! November 16th. — I am so small in my expectations, that a week of industry delights. Rose before light every morn; visited from necessity once, and again for books; read Butler's Ana-

logy ; commented on the Scriptures ; read in a little book, — Cicero's Letters, — a few : touched Shakspeare, — washed, carded, cleaned house, and baked. To-day cannot recall an error, nor scarcely a sacrifice, but more fulness of content in the labors of a day never was felt. There is a sweet pleasure in bending to circumstances while superior to them.

" Malden, September, 1807.' — The rapture of feeling I would part from, for days more devoted to higher discipline. But when Nature beams with such excess of beauty, when the heart thrills with hope in its Author, — feels that it is related to him more than by any ties of Creation, — it exults, too fondly perhaps for a state of trial. But in dead of night, nearer morning, when the eastern stars glow or appear to glow with more indescribable lustre, a lustre which penetrates the spirit with wonder and curiosity, — then, however awed, who can fear? Since Sabbath, Aunt B—— [the insane aunt] was brought here. Ah! mortifying sight! instinct perhaps triumphs over reason, and every dignified respect to herself, in her anxiety about recovery, and the smallest means connected. Not one wish of others detains her, not one care. But it alarms me not, I shall delight to return

to God. His name my fullest confidence. His sole presence ineffable pleasure.

"I walked yesterday five or more miles, lost to mental or heart existence, through fatigue, — just fit for the society I went into, all mildness and the most commonplace virtue. The lady is celebrated for her cleverness, and she was never so good to me. Met a lady in the morning walk, a foreigner, — conversed on the accomplishments of Miss T. My mind expanded with novel and innocent pleasure. Ah! were virtue, and that of dear heavenly meekness attached by any necessity to a lower rank of genteel people, who would sympathize with the exalted with satisfaction? But that is not the case, I believe. A mediocrity does seem to me more distant from eminent virtue than the extremes of station; though after all it must depend on the nature of the heart. A mediocre mind will be deranged in either extreme of wealth or poverty, praise or censure, society or solitude. The feverish lust of notice perhaps in all these cases would injure the heart of common refinement and virtue."

Later she writes of her early days in Malden: "When I get a glimpse of the revolutions of nations, — that retribution which seems forever

going on in this part of creation, — I remember with great satisfaction that from all the ills suffered, in childhood and since, from others, I felt that it was rather the order of things than their individual fault. It was from being early impressed by my poor unpractical aunt, that Providence and Prayer were all in all. Poor woman! Could her own temper in childhood or age have been subdued, how happy for herself, who had a warm heart; but for me would have prevented those early lessons of fortitude, which her caprices taught me to practise. Had I prospered in life, what a proud, excited being, even to feverishness, I might have been. Loving to shine, flattered and flattering, anxious, and wrapped in others, frail and feverish as myself."

She alludes to the early days of her solitude, sixty years afterward, on her own farm in Maine, speaking sadly the thoughts suggested by the rich autumn landscape around her: "Ah! as I walked out this afternoon, so sad was wearied Nature that I felt her whisper to me, 'Even these leaves you use to think my better emblem have lost their charm on me too, and I weary of my pilgrimage, — tired that I must again be clothed in the grandeurs of winter, and anon be bedizened in flowers and cascades. Oh,

if there be a power superior to me, — and that there is, my own dread fetters proclaim, — when will He let my lights go out, my tides cease to an eternal ebb? Oh for transformation! I am not infinite, nor have I power or will, but bound and imprisoned, the tool of mind, even of the beings I feed and adorn. Vital, I feel not: not active, but passive, and cannot aid the creatures which seem my progeny, — myself. But you are ingrate to tire of me, now you want to look beyond. 'T was I who soothed your thorny childhood, though you knew me not, and you were placed in my most leafless waste. Yet I comforted thee when going on the daily errand, fed thee with my mallows, on the first young day of bread failing. More, I led thee when thou knewest not a syllable of my active Cause (any more than if it had been dead eternal matter), to that Cause; and from the solitary heart taught thee to say, at first womanhood, Alive with God is enough, — 't is rapture.'"[1]

"This morning rich in existence; the remembrance of past destitution in the deep poverty of my aunt, and her most unhappy temper; of bitterer days of youth and age, when my senses and understanding seemed but means of labor, or to learn my own unpopular destiny, and that

— but no more; — joy, hope and resignation unite me to Him whose mysterious Will adjusts everything, and the darkest and lightest are alike welcome. Oh! could this state of mind continue, death would not be longed for." "I felt, till above twenty years old, as though Christianity were as necessary to the world as existence; — was ignorant that it was lately promulged, or partially received." Later: "Could I have those hours in which in fresh youth I said, To obey God is joy, though there were no hereafter, I should rejoice, though returning to dust."

"Folly follows me as the shadow does the form. Yet my whole life devoted to find some new truth which will link me closer to God. And the simple principle which made me say, in youth and laborious poverty, that, should He make me a blot on the fair face of his Creation, I should rejoice in His will, has never been equalled, though it returns in the long life of destitution like an Angel. I end days of fine health and cheerfulness without getting upward now. How did I use to think them lost! If more liberal views of the divine government make me think nothing lost which carries me to His now hidden presence, there may be danger

of losing and causing others the loss of that awe and sobriety so indispensable."

She was addressed and offered marriage by a man of talents, education and good social position, whom she respected. The proposal gave her pause and much to think, but after consideration she refused it, I know not on what grounds: but a few allusions to it in her diary suggest that it was a religious act, and it is easy to see that she could hardly promise herself sympathy in her religious abandonment with any but a rarely-found partner.

"1807. January 19, Malden [alluding to the sale of her farm]. Last night I spoke two sentences about that foolish place, which I most bitterly lament, — not because they were improper, but they arose from anger. It is difficult, when we have no kind of barrier, to command our feelings. But this shall teach me. It humbles me beyond anything I have met, to find myself for a moment affected with hope, fear, or especially anger, about interest. But I did overcome and return kindness for the repeated provocations. What is it? My uncle has been the means of lessening my property. Ridiculous to wound him for that. He was honestly seeking his own. But at last, this very

night, the bargain is closed, and I am delighted with myself: — my dear self has done well. Never did I so exult in a trifle. Happy beginning of my bargain, though the sale of the place appears to me one of the worst things for me at this time."

"January 21. Weary at times of objects so tedious to hear and see. O the power of vision, then the delicate power of the nerve which receives impressions from sounds! If ever I am blest with a social life, let the accent be grateful. Could I at times be regaled with music, it would remind me that there are *sounds*. Shut up in this severe weather with careful, infirm, afflicted age, it is wonderful, my spirits: hopes I can have none. Not a prospect but is dark on earth, as to knowledge and joy from externals: but the prospect of a dying bed reflects lustre on all the rest.

"The evening is fine, but I dare not enjoy it. The moon and stars reproach me, because I had to do with mean fools. Should I take so much care to save a few dollars? Never was I so much ashamed. Did I say with what rapture I might dispose of them to the poor? Pho! self-preservation, dignity, confidence in the future, contempt of trifles! Alas, I am disgraced. Took

a momentary revenge on —— for worrying me."

"Jan. 30. I walked to Captain Dexter's. Sick. Promised never to put that ring on. Ended miserably the month which began so worldly.

"It was the choice of the Eternal that gave the glowing seraph his joys, and to me my vile imprisonment. I adore Him. It was His will that gives my superiors to shine in wisdom, friendship, and ardent pursuits, while I pass my youth, its last traces, in the veriest shades of ignorance and complete destitution of society. I praise Him, though when my strength of body falters, it is a trial not easily described."

"True, I must finger the very farthing candle-ends, — the duty assigned to my pride; and indeed so poor are some of those allotted to join me on the weary needy path, that 't is benevolence enjoins self-denial. Could I but dare it in the bread-and-water diet! Could I but live free from calculation, as in the first half of life, when my poor aunt lived. I had ten dollars a year for clothes and charity, and I never remember to have been needy, though I never had but two or three aids in those six years of earning my home. That ten dollars my dear father earned, and one hundred dollars remain, and I can't

bear to take it, and don't know what to do. Yet I would not breathe to —— or —— my want. 'T is only now that I would not let —— pay my hotel-bill. They have enough to do. Besides, it would send me packing to depend for anything. Better anything than dishonest dependence, which robs the poorer, and despoils friendship of equal connection."

In 1830, in one of her distant homes, she reproaches herself with some sudden passion she has for visiting her old home and friends in the city, where she had lived for a while with her brother [Mr. Emerson's father] and afterwards with his widow. "Do I yearn to be in Boston? 'T would fatigue, disappoint; I, who have so long despised means, who have always found it a sort of rebellion to seek them? Yet the old desire for the worm is not so greedy as [mine] to find myself in my old haunts."

1833. "The difficulty of getting places of low board for a lady, is obvious. And, at moments, I am tired out. Yet how independent, how better than to hang on friends! And sometimes I fancy that I am emptied and peeled to carry some seed to the ignorant, which no idler wind can so well dispense." "Hard to contend for a health which is daily used in petition for

a final close." "Am I, poor victim, swept on through the sternest ordinations of Nature's laws which slay? yet I 'll trust." "There was great truth in what a pious enthusiast said, that, if God should cast him into hell, he would yet clasp his hands around Him."

"Newburyport, Sept. 1822. High, solemn, entrancing noon, prophetic of the approach of the Presiding Spirit of Autumn. God preserve my reason! Alone, feeling strongly, fully, that I have deserved nothing; according to Adam Smith's idea of society, 'done nothing;' doing nothing, never expect to; yet joying in existence, perhaps striving to beautify one individual of God's creation.

"Our civilization is not always mending our poetry. It is sauced and spiced with our complexity of arts and inventions, but lacks somewhat of the grandeur that belongs to a Doric and unphilosophical age. In a religious contemplative public it would have less outward variety, but simpler and grander means; a few pulsations of created beings, a few successions of acts, a few lamps held out in the firmament enable us to talk of Time, make epochs, write histories, — to do more, — to date the revelations of God to man. But these lamps are held to measure out

some of the moments of eternity, to divide the history of God's operations in the birth and death of nations, of worlds. It is a goodly name for our notions of breathing, suffering, enjoying, acting. We personify it. We call it by every name of fleeting, dreaming, vaporing imagery. Yet it is nothing. We exist in eternity. Dissolve the body and the night is gone, the stars are extinguished, and we measure duration by the number of our thoughts, by the activity of reason, the discovery of truths, the acquirement of virtue, the approach to God. And the gray-headed god throws his shadows all around, and his slaves catch, now at this, now at that, one at the halo he throws around poetry, or pebbles, bugs, or bubbles. Sometimes they climb, sometimes creep into the meanest holes — but they are all alike in vanishing, like the shadow of a cloud."

To her nephew Charles: "War; what do I think of it? Why in your ear I think it so much better than oppression that if it were ravaging the whole geography of despotism it would be an omen of high and glorious import. Channing paints its miseries, but does he know those of a worse war, — private animosities, pinching, bitter warfare of the human heart, the cruel

oppression of the poor by the rich, which corrupts old worlds? How much better, more honest, are storming and conflagration of towns! They are but letting blood which corrupts into worms and dragons. A war-trump would be harmony to the jars of theologians and statesmen such as the papers bring. It was the glory of the Chosen People, nay, it is said there was war in Heaven. War is among the means of discipline, the rough meliorators, and no worse than the strife with poverty, malice and ignorance. War devastates the conscience of men, yet corrupt peace does not less. And if you tell me of the miseries of the battle-field, with the sensitive Channing (of whose love of life I am ashamed), what of a few days of agony, what of a vulture being the bier, tomb and parson of a hero, compared to the long years of sticking on a bed and wished away? For the widows and orphans — Oh, I could give facts of the long-drawn years of imprisoned minds and hearts, which uneducated orphans endure!

"O Time! Thou loiterer. Thou, whose might has laid low the vastest and crushed the worm, restest on thy hoary throne, with like potency over thy agitations and thy graves. When will thy routines give way to higher and lasting institutions? When thy trophies and thy

name and all its wizard forms be lost in the Genius of Eternity? In Eternity, no deceitful promises, no fantastic illusions, no riddles concealed by thy shrouds, none of thy Arachnean webs, which decoy and destroy. Hasten to finish thy motley work, on which frightful Gorgons are at play, spite of holy ghosts. 'T is already moth-eaten and its shuttles quaver, as the beams of the loom are shaken.

"Sat. 25. Hail requiem of departed Time! Never was incumbent's funeral followed by expectant heir with more satisfaction. Yet not his hope is mine. For in the weary womb are prolific numbers of the same sad hour, colored by the memory of defeats in virtue, by the prophecy of others, more dreary, blind and sickly. Yet He who formed thy web, who stretched thy warp from long ages, has graciously given man to throw his shuttle, or feel he does, and irradiate the filling woof with many a flowery rainbow, — labors, rather — evanescent efforts, which will wear like flowerets in brighter soils; — has attuned his mind in such unison with the harp of the universe, that he is never without some chord of hope's music. 'T is not in the nature of existence, while there is a God, to be without the pale of excitement. When the dreamy pages

of life seem all turned and folded down to very weariness, even this idea of those who fill the hour with crowded virtues, lifts the spectator to other worlds, and he adores the eternal purposes of Him who lifteth up and casteth down, bringeth to dust, and raiseth to the skies. 'T is a strange deficiency in Brougham's title of a System of Natural Theology, when the moral constitution of the being for whom these contrivances were made is not recognized. The wonderful inhabitant of the building to which unknown ages were the mechanics, is left out as to that part where the Creator had put his own lighted candle, placed a vicegerent. Not to complain of the poor old earth's chaotic state, brought so near in its long and gloomy transmutings by the geologist. Yet its youthful charms as decked by the hand of Moses' Cosmogony, will linger about the heart, while Poetry succumbs to Science. Yet there is a sombre music in the whirl of times so long gone by. And the bare bones of this poor embryo earth may give the idea of the Infinite far, far better than when dignified with arts and industry: — its oceans, when beating the symbols of ceaseless ages, than when covered with cargoes of war and oppression. How grand its preparation for souls, — souls who were to feel

the Divinity, before Science had dissected the emotions, and applied its steely analysis to that state of being which recognizes neither psychology nor element.'

" September, 1836. Vale. The mystic dream which is shed over the season. O, to dream more deeply; to lose external objects a little more! Yet the hold on them is so slight, that duty is lost sight of perhaps, at times. Sadness is better than walking talking acting somnambulism. Yes, this entire solitude with the Being who makes the powers of life! Even Fame which lives in other states of Virtue, palls. Usefulness, if it requires action, seems less like existence than the desire of being absorbed in God, retaining consciousness. Number the waste places of the journey, — the secret martyrdom of youth, heavier than the stake, I thought, the narrow limits which know no outlet, the bitter dregs of the cup, — and all are sweetened by the purpose of Him I love. The idea of being no mate for those intellectualists I 've loved to admire, is no pain. Hereafter the same solitary joy will go with me, were I not to live, as I expect, in the vision of the Infinite. Never do the feelings of the Infinite and the consciousness of finite frailty and ignorance harmonize so well as at this mystic

season in the deserts of life. Contradictions, the modern German says, of the Infinite and finite."

I sometimes fancy I detect in her writings a certain — shall I say — polite and courtly homage to the name and dignity of Jesus, not at all spontaneous, but growing out of her respect to the Revelation, and really veiling and betraying her organic dislike to any interference, any mediation between her and the Author of her being, assurance of whose direct dealing with her she incessantly invokes: for example, the parenthesis "Saving thy presence, Priest and Medium of all this approach for a sinful creature!" "Were it possible that the Creator was not virtually present with the spirits and bodies which He has made: — if it were in the nature of things possible He could withdraw himself, — I would hold on to the faith that, at some moment of His existence, I was present: that, though cast from Him, my sorrows, my ignorance and meanness were a part of His plan; my death, too, however long and tediously delayed to prayer, — was decreed, was fixed. Oh how weary in youth — more so scarcely now, not whenever I can breathe, as it seems, the atmosphere of the Omnipresence: then I ask not faith nor knowledge; honors, pleasures, labors, I always refuse,

compared to this divine partaking of existence; — but how rare, how dependent on the organs through which the soul operates!'

"The sickness of the last week was fine medicine; pain disintegrated the spirit, or became spiritual. I rose, — I felt that I had given to God more perhaps than an angel could, — had promised Him in youth that to be a blot on this fair world, at His command, would be acceptable. Constantly offer myself to continue the obscurest and loneliest thing ever heard of, with one proviso, — His agency. Yes, love Thee, and all Thou dost, while Thou sheddest frost and darkness on every path of mine."

For years she had her bed made in the form of a coffin; and delighted herself with the discovery of the figure of a coffin made every evening on their sidewalk, by the shadow of a church tower which adjoined the house.

Saladin caused his shroud to be made, and carried it to battle as his standard. She made up her shroud, and death still refusing to come, and she thinking it a pity to let it lie idle, wore it as a night-gown, or a day-gown, nay, went out to ride in it, on horseback, in her mountain roads, until it was worn out. Then she had another made up, and as she never travelled without

being provided for this dear and indispensable contingency, I believe she wore out a great many.

"1833. I have given up, the last year or two, the hope of dying. In the lowest ebb of health nothing is ominous; diet and exercise restore. So it seems best to get that very humbling business of insurance. I enter my dear sixty the last of this month."

"1835, June 16. Tedious indisposition: — hoped, as it took a new form, it would open the cool, sweet grave. Now existence itself in any form is sweet. Away with knowledge; — God alone. He communicates this our condition and humble waiting, or I should never perceive Him. Science, Nature, — O, I 've yearned to open some page; — not now, too late. Ill health and nerves. O dear worms, — how they will at some sure time take down this tedious tabernacle, most valuable companions, instructors in the science of mind, by gnawing away the meshes which have chained it. A very Beatrice in showing the Paradise. Yes, I irk under contact with forms of depravity, while I am resigned to being nothing, never expect a palm, a laurel, hereafter."

"1826, July. If one could choose, and without crime be gibbeted, — were it not altogether

better than the long drooping away by age without mentality or devotion? The vulture and crow would *caw caw*, and, unconscious of any deformity in the mutilated body, would relish their meal, make no grimace of affected sympathy, nor suffer any real compassion. I pray to die, though happier myriads and mine own companions press nearer to the throne. His coldest beam will purify and render me forever holy. Had I the highest place of acquisition and diffusing virtue here, the principle of human sympathy would be too strong for that rapt emotion, that severe delight which I crave; nay for that kind of obscure virtue which is so rich to lay at the feet of the Author of morality. Those economists (Adam Smith) who say nothing is added to the wealth of a nation but what is dug out of the earth, and that, whatever disposition of virtue may exist, unless something is done for society, deserves no fame, — why, I am content with such paradoxical kind of facts; but one secret sentiment of virtue, disinterested (or perhaps not), is worthy, and will tell, in the world of spirits, of God's immediate presence, more than the blood of many a martyr who has it not."

"I have heard that the greatest geniuses have died ignorant of their power and influence on

the arts and sciences. I believe thus much, that their large perception consumed their egotism, or made it impossible for them to make small calculations."

"That greatest of all gifts, however small my power of receiving, — the capacity, the element to love the All-perfect, without regard to personal happiness: — happiness? — 't is itself." She checks herself amid her passionate prayers for immediate communion with God; — "I who never made a sacrifice to record, — I cowering in the nest of quiet for so many years; — I indulge the delight of sympathizing with great virtues, — blessing their Original: Have I this right?" "While I am sympathizing in the government of God over the world, perhaps I lose nearer views. Well, I learned his existence *a priori*. No object of science or observation ever was pointed out to me by my poor aunt, but His Being and commands; and oh how much I trusted Him with every event till I learned the order of human events from the pressure of wants."

"What a timid, ungrateful creature! Fear the deepest pitfalls of age, when pressing on, in imagination at least, to Him with whom a day is a thousand years, — with whom all miseries

and irregularities are conforming to universal good! Shame on me who have learned within three years to sit whole days in peace and enjoyment without the least apparent benefit to any, or knowledge to myself; — resigned, too, to the memory of long years of slavery passed in labor and ignorance, to the loss of that character which I once thought and felt so sure of, without ever being conscious of acting from calculation."

Her friends used to say to her, "I wish you joy of the worm." And when at last her release arrived, the event of her death had really such a comic tinge in the eyes of every one who knew her, that her friends feared they might, at her funeral, not dare to look at each other, lest they should forget the serious proprieties of the hour.

She gave high counsels. It was the privilege of certain boys to have this immeasurably high standard indicated to their childhood; a blessing which nothing else in education could supply. It is frivolous to ask, — "And was she ever a Christian in practice?" Cassandra uttered, to a frivolous, skeptical time, the arcana of the Gods: but it is easy to believe that Cassandra domesticated in a lady's house would have proved a troublesome boarder. Is it the less desirable to

have the lofty abstractions because the abstractionist is nervous and irritable? Shall we not keep Flamsteed and Herschel in the observatory, though it should even be proved that they neglected to rectify their own kitchen clock? It is essential to the safety of every mackerel fisher that latitudes and longitudes should be astronomically ascertained; and so every banker, shopkeeper and wood-sawer has a stake in the elevation of the moral code by saint and prophet. Very rightly, then, the Christian ages, proceeding on a grand instinct, have said: Faith alone, Faith alone.'

XVI

SAMUEL HOAR

"Magno se judice quisque tuetur;
Victrix causa deis placuit sed victa Catoni."

LUCAN.

A YEAR ago, how often did we meet
Beneath these elms, once more in sober bloom,
Thy tall, sad figure pacing down the street,
And now the robin sings above thy tomb!
Thy name on other shores may ne'er be known,
Though Rome austere no graver consul knew,
But Massachusetts her true son shall own;
Out of her soil thy hardy virtues grew.
She loves the man that chose the conquered cause,
With upright soul that bowed to God alone;
The clean hands that upheld her equal laws,
The old religion ne'er to be outgrown;
The cold demeanor, the warm heart beneath,
The simple grandeur of thy life and death.

F. B. SANBORN.

April, 1857.





safe for him to appear in public, or to take his daily walk, as he had done, unattended by his friends, in the streets of the city. He was advised to withdraw to private lodgings, which were eagerly offered him by friends. He rejected the advice, and refused the offers, saying that he was old, and his life was not worth much, but he had rather the boys should troll his old head like a football in their streets, than that he should hide it. And he continued the uniform practice of his daily walk in all parts of the city. But when the mob of Charleston was assembled in the streets before his hotel, and a deputation of gentlemen waited upon him in the hall to say they had come with the unanimous voice of the State to remove him by force, and the carriage was at the door, he considered his duty discharged to the last point of possibility. The force was apparent and irresistible; the legal officer's part was up; it was now time for the military officer to be sent; and he said, "Well, gentlemen, since it is your pleasure to use force, I must go." But his opinion was unchanged.

In like manner now, when the votes of the Free States, as shown in the recent election in the State of Pennsylvania, had disappointed the hopes of mankind and betrayed the cause of

freedom, he considered the question of justice and liberty, for his age, lost, and had no longer the will to drag his days through the dishonors of the long defeat, and promptly withdrew, but with unaltered belief.

He was a very natural, but a very high character; a man of simple tastes, plain and true in speech, with a clear perception of justice, and a perfect obedience thereto in his action; of a strong understanding, precise and methodical, which gave him great eminence in the legal profession.[1] It was rather his reputation for severe method in his intellect than any special direction in his studies that caused him to be offered the mathematical chair in Harvard University, when vacant in 1806. The severity of his logic might have inspired fear, had it not been restrained by his natural reverence, which made him modest and courteous, though his courtesy had a grave and almost military air. He combined a uniform self-respect with a natural reverence for every other man; so that it was perfectly easy for him to associate with farmers, and with plain, uneducated, poor men, and he had a strong, unaffected interest in farms, and crops, and weathers, and the common incidents of rural life. It was just as easy for him to meet on the same

floor, and with the same plain courtesy, men of distinction and large ability. He was fond of farms and trees, fond of birds, and attentive to their manners and habits; addicted to long and retired walks; temperate to asceticism, for no lesson of his experience was lost on him, and his self-command was perfect. Though rich, of a plainness and almost poverty of personal expenditure, yet liberal of his money to any worthy use, readily lending it to young men, and industrious men, and by no means eager to reclaim of them either the interest or the principal. He was open-handed to every charity, and every public claim that had any show of reason in it. When I talked with him one day of some inequality of taxes in the town, he said it was his practice to pay whatever was demanded; for, though he might think the taxation large and very unequally proportioned, yet he thought the money might as well go in this way as in any other.

The strength and the beauty of the man lay in the natural goodness and justice of his mind, which, in manhood and in old age, after dealing all his life with weighty private and public interests, left an infantile innocence, of which we have no second or third example, — the strength of

a chief united to the modesty of a child. He returned from courts or congresses to sit down, with unaltered humility, in the church or in the town-house, on the plain wooden bench where honor came and sat down beside him.

He was a man in whom so rare a spirit of justice visibly dwelt, that if one had met him in a cabin or in a forest he must still seem a public man, answering as sovereign state to sovereign state; and might easily suggest Milton's picture of John Bradshaw, that "he was a consul from whom the fasces did not depart with the year, but in private seemed ever sitting in judgment on kings."[1] Everybody knew where to find him. What he said, that would he do. But he disdained any arts in his speech: he was not adorned with any graces of rhetoric, —

"But simple truth his utmost skill."[2]

So cautious was he, and tender of the truth, that he sometimes wearied his audience with the pains he took to qualify and verify his statements, adding clause on clause to do justice to all his conviction. He had little or no power of generalization. But a plain way he had of putting his statement with all his might, and now and then borrowing the aid of a good story, or a

farmer's phrase, whose force had imprinted it on his memory, and, by the same token, his hearers were bound to remember his point.

The impression he made on juries was honorable to him and them. For a long term of years, he was at the head of the bar in Middlesex, practising, also, in the adjoining counties. He had one side or the other of every important case, and his influence was reckoned despotic, and sometimes complained of as a bar to public justice. Many good stories are still told of the perplexity of jurors who found the law and the evidence on one side, and yet Squire Hoar had said that he believed, on his conscience, his client entitled to a verdict.[1] And what Middlesex jury, containing any God-fearing men in it, would hazard an opinion in flat contradiction to what Squire Hoar believed to be just? He was entitled to this respect; for he discriminated in the business that was brought to him, and would not argue a rotten cause; and he refused very large sums offered him to undertake the defence of criminal persons.

His character made him the conscience of the community in which he lived. And in many a town it was asked, "What does Squire Hoar think of this?" and in political crises, he was

entreated to write a few lines to make known to good men in Chelmsford, or Marlborough, or Shirley, what that opinion was. I used to feel that his conscience was a kind of meter of the degree of honesty in the country, by which on each occasion it was tried, and sometimes found wanting. I am sorry to say he could not be elected to Congress a second time from Middlesex.

And in his own town, if some important end was to be gained, — as, for instance, when the county commissioners refused to rebuild the burned court-house, on the belief that the courts would be transferred from Concord to Lowell, — all parties combined to send Mr. Hoar to the Legislature, where his presence and speech, of course, secured the rebuilding ; and, of course also, having answered our end, we passed him by and elected somebody else at the next term.

His head, with singular grace in its lines, had a resemblance to the bust of Dante. He retained to the last the erectness of his tall but slender form, and not less the full strength of his mind. Such was, in old age, the beauty of his person and carriage, as if the mind radiated, and made the same impression of probity on all beholders. His beauty was pathetic and touching in these

latest days, and, as now appears, it awakened a certain tender fear in all who saw him, that the costly ornament of our homes and halls and streets was speedily to be removed. Yet how solitary he looked, day by day in the world, this man so revered, this man of public life, of large acquaintance and wide family connection! Was it some reserve of constitution, or was it only the lot of excellence, that with aims so pure and single, he seemed to pass out of life alone, and, as it were, unknown to those who were his contemporaries and familiars?'.

[The following sketch of Mr. Hoar from a slightly different point of view, was prepared by Mr. Emerson, shortly after the above paper appeared in Putnam's Magazine (December, 1856), at the request of the Editor of the Monthly Religious Magazine, and was printed there, January, 1857. It is here appended as giving some additional traits of a characteristic figure which may serve as a pendant in some respects to that of Dr. Ripley.]

Mr. Hoar was distinguished in his profession by the grasp of his mind, and by the simplicity of his means. His ability lay in the clear apprehension and the powerful statement of the material points of his case. He

soon possessed it, and he never possessed it better, and he was equally ready at any moment to state the facts. He saw what was essential, and refused whatever was not, so that no man embarrassed himself less with a needless array of books and evidences of contingent value.

These tactics of the lawyer were the tactics of his life. He had uniformly the air of knowing just what he wanted and of going to that in the shortest way. It is singular that his character should make so deep an impression, standing and working as he did on so common a ground. He was neither spiritualist nor man of genius nor of a literary nor an executive talent. In strictness, the vigor of his understanding was directed on the ordinary domestic and municipal well-being. Society had reason to cherish him, for he was a main pillar on which it leaned. The useful and practical super-abounded in his mind, and to a degree which might be even comic to young and poetical persons. If he spoke of the engagement of two lovers, he called it a contract. Nobody cared to speak of thoughts or aspirations to a black-letter lawyer, who only studied to keep men out of prison, and their lands out of attachment. Had you read Swedenborg or Plotinus to him, he would have waited till you had done, and answered you out of the Revised Statutes. He had an affinity for mathematics, but it was a taste rather than a pursuit, and of the modern sciences he liked to read popular books on geology. Yet so entirely was this

respect to the ground-plan and substructure of society a natural ability, and from the order of his mind, and not for "tickling commodity," that it was admirable, as every work of nature is, and like one of those opaque crystals, big beryls weighing tons, which are found in Acworth, New Hampshire, not less perfect in their angles and structure, and only less beautiful, than the transparent topazes and diamonds. Meantime, whilst his talent and his profession led him to guard the material wealth of society, a more disinterested person did not exist. And if there were regions of knowledge not open to him, he did not pretend to them. His modesty was sincere. He had a childlike innocence and a native temperance, which left him no temptations, and enabled him to meet every comer with a free and disengaged courtesy that had no memory in it

"Of wrong and outrage with which earth is filled."[1]

No person was more keenly alive to the stabs which the ambition and avarice of men inflicted on the commonwealth. Yet when politicians or speculators approached him, these memories left no scar; his countenance had an unalterable tranquillity and sweetness; he had nothing to repent of, — let the cloud rest where it might, he dwelt in eternal sunshine.

He had his birth and breeding in a little country town, where the old religion existed in strictness, and spent all his energy in creating purity of manners and careful education.[2] No art or practice of the farm was unknown to him, and the farmers greeted him as one of

themselves, whilst they paid due homage to his powers of mind and to his virtues.

He loved the dogmas and the simple usages of his church; was always an honored and sometimes an active member. He never shrunk from a disagreeable duty. In the time of the Sunday laws he was a tithing-man; under the Maine Law he was a prosecutor of the liquor dealers. It seemed as if the New England church had formed him to be its friend and defender; the lover and assured friend of its parish by-laws, of its ministers, its rites, and its social reforms. He was a model of those formal but reverend manners which make what is called a gentleman of the old school, so called under an impression that the style is passing away, but which, I suppose, is an optical illusion, as there is always a few more of the class remaining, and always a few young men to whom these manners are native.

I have spoken of his modesty; he had nothing to say about himself; and his sincere admiration was commanded by certain heroes of the profession, like Judge Parsons and Judge Marshall, Mr. Mason and Mr. Webster. When some one said, in his presence, that Chief Justice Marshall was failing in his intellect, Mr. Hoar remarked that "Judge Marshall could afford to lose brains enough to furnish three or four common men, before common men would find it out." He had a huge respect for Mr. Webster's ability, with whom he had often occasion to try his strength at the bar,

and a proportionately deep regret at Mr. Webster's political course in his later years.

There was no elegance in his reading or tastes beyond the crystal clearness of his mind. He had no love of poetry; and I have heard that the only verse that he was ever known to quote was the Indian rule:

> "When the oaks are in the gray,
> Then, farmers, plant away."

But I find an elegance in his quiet but firm withdrawal from all business in the courts which he could drop without manifest detriment to the interests involved (and this when in his best strength), and his self-dedication thenceforward to unpaid services of the Temperance and Peace and other philanthropic societies, the Sunday Schools, the cause of Education, and specially of the University, and to such political activities as a strong sense of duty and the love of order and of freedom urged him to forward.

Perfect in his private life, the husband, father, friend, he was severe only with himself. He was as if on terms of honor with those nearest him, nor did he think a lifelong familiarity could excuse any omission of courtesy from him. He carried ceremony finely to the last. But his heart was all gentleness, gratitude and bounty.

> With beams December planets dart,
> His cold eye truth and conduct scanned;
> July was in his sunny heart,
> October in his liberal hand.

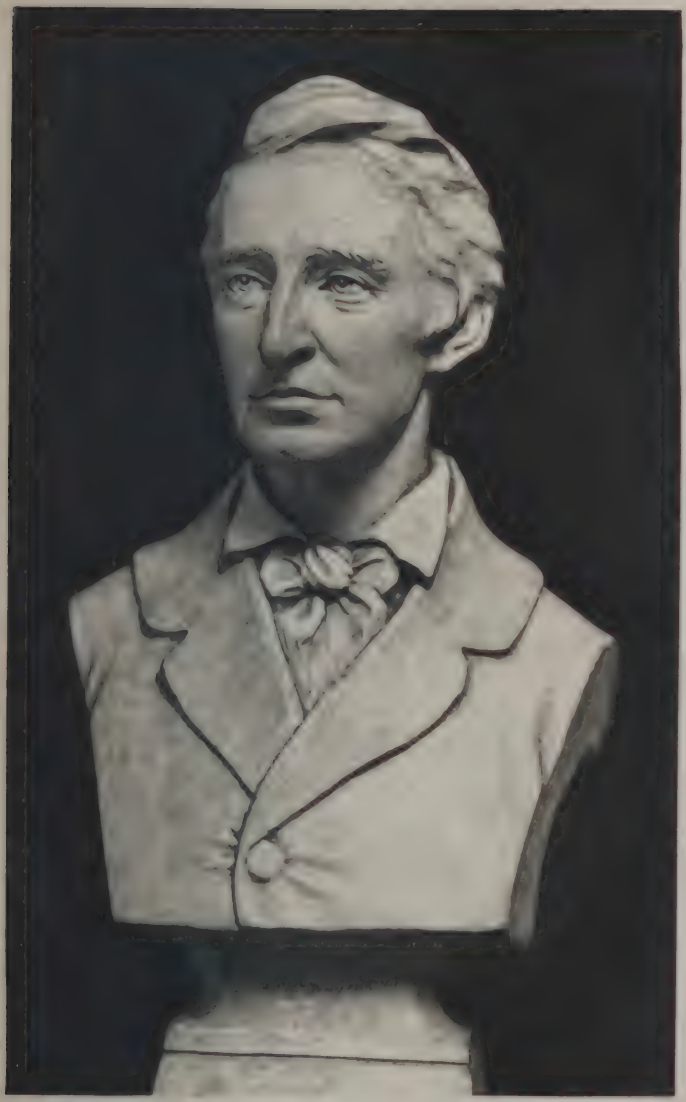
XVII

THOREAU

A QUEEN rejoices in her peers,
And wary Nature knows her own,
By court and city, dale and down,
And like a lover volunteers,
And to her son will treasures more,
And more to purpose, freely pour
In one wood walk, than learned men
Will find with glass in ten times ten.

It seemed as if the breezes brought him,
It seemed as if the sparrows taught him,
As if by secret sign he knew
Where in far fields the orchis grew.

Henry D. Thoreau



THOREAU

HENRY DAVID THOREAU was the last male descendant of a French ancestor who came to this country from the Isle of Guernsey. His character exhibited occasional traits drawn from this blood, in singular combination with a very strong Saxon genius.

He was born in Concord, Massachusetts, on the 12th of July, 1817. He was graduated at Harvard College in 1837, but without any literary distinction. An iconoclast in literature, he seldom thanked colleges for their service to him, holding them in small esteem, whilst yet his debt to them was important. After leaving the University, he joined his brother in teaching a private school, which he soon renounced.[1] His father was a manufacturer of lead-pencils, and Henry applied himself for a time to this craft, believing he could make a better pencil than was then in use. After completing his experiments, he exhibited his work to chemists and artists in Boston, and having obtained their certificates to its excellence and to its equality with the best London manufacture, he returned home contented. His friends congratulated him that

surveyor, but he was daily beset with graver questions, which he manfully confronted. He interrogated every custom, and wished to settle all his practice on an ideal foundation. He was a protestant *à outrance*, and few lives contain so many renunciations. He was bred to no profession; he never married; he lived alone; he never went to church; he never voted; he refused to pay a tax to the State; he ate no flesh, he drank no wine, he never knew the use of tobacco; and, though a naturalist, he used neither trap nor gun.' He chose, wisely no doubt for himself, to be the bachelor of thought and Nature. He had no talent for wealth, and knew how to be poor without the least hint of squalor or inelegance. Perhaps he fell into his way of living without forecasting it much, but approved it with later wisdom. "I am often reminded," he wrote in his journal, "that if I had bestowed on me the wealth of Crœsus, my aims must be still the same, and my means essentially the same." He had no temptations to fight against,—no appetites, no passions, no taste for elegant trifles. A fine house, dress, the manners and talk of highly cultivated people were all thrown away on him. He much preferred a good Indian, and considered these refinements as impediments to

conversation, wishing to meet his companion on the simplest terms. He declined invitations to dinner-parties, because there each was in every one's way, and he could not meet the individuals to any purpose. "They make their pride," he said, "in making their dinner cost much; I make my pride in making my dinner cost little."[1] When asked at table what dish he preferred, he answered, "The nearest." He did not like the taste of wine, and never had a vice in his life. He said, — "I have a faint recollection of pleasure derived from smoking dried lily-stems, before I was a man. I had commonly a supply of these. I have never smoked anything more noxious."

He chose to be rich by making his wants few, and supplying them himself. In his travels, he used the railroad only to get over so much country as was unimportant to the present purpose, walking hundreds of miles, avoiding taverns, buying a lodging in farmers' and fishermen's houses, as cheaper, and more agreeable to him, and because there he could better find the men and the information he wanted.

There was somewhat military in his nature, not to be subdued, always manly and able, but rarely tender, as if he did not feel himself except

in opposition. He wanted a fallacy to expose, a blunder to pillory, I may say required a little sense of victory, a roll of the drum, to call his powers into full exercise. It cost him nothing to say No; indeed he found it much easier than to say Yes. It seemed as if his first instinct on hearing a proposition was to controvert it, so impatient was he of the limitations of our daily thought. This habit, of course, is a little chilling to the social affections; and though the companion would in the end acquit him of any malice or untruth, yet it mars conversation. Hence, no equal companion stood in affectionate relations with one so pure and guileless. "I love Henry," said one of his friends, "but I cannot like him; and as for taking his arm, I should as soon think of taking the arm of an elm-tree."[1]

Yet, hermit and stoic as he was, he was really fond of sympathy, and threw himself heartily and childlike into the company of young people whom he loved, and whom he delighted to entertain, as he only could, with the varied and endless anecdotes of his experiences by field and river: and he was always ready to lead a huckleberry-party or a search for chestnuts or grapes. Talking, one day, of a public discourse, Henry remarked that whatever succeeded with the

audience was bad. I said, "Who would not like to write something which all can read, like Robinson Crusoe? and who does not see with regret that his page is not solid with a right materialistic treatment, which delights everybody?" Henry objected, of course, and vaunted the better lectures which reached only a few persons. But, at supper, a young girl, understanding that he was to lecture at the Lyceum, sharply asked him, "Whether his lecture would be a nice, interesting story, such as she wished to hear, or whether it was one of those old philosophical things that she did not care about." Henry turned to her, and bethought himself, and, I saw, was trying to believe that he had matter that might fit her and her brother, who were to sit up and go to the lecture, if it was a good one for them.'

He was a speaker and actor of the truth, born such, and was ever running into dramatic situations from this cause. In any circumstance it interested all bystanders to know what part Henry would take, and what he would say; and he did not disappoint expectation, but used an original judgment on each emergency. In 1845 he built himself a small framed house on the shores of Walden Pond, and lived there two years alone,

a life of labor and study. This action was quite native and fit for him. No one who knew him would tax him with affectation. He was more unlike his neighbors in his thought than in his action. As soon as he had exhausted the advantages of that solitude, he abandoned it. In 1847, not approving some uses to which the public expenditure was applied, he refused to pay his town tax, and was put in jail. A friend paid the tax for him, and he was released. The like annoyance was threatened the next year. But as his friends paid the tax, notwithstanding his protest, I believe he ceased to resist.[1] No opposition or ridicule had any weight with him. He coldly and fully stated his opinion without affecting to believe that it was the opinion of the company. It was of no consequence if every one present held the opposite opinion. On one occasion he went to the University Library to procure some books. The librarian refused to lend them. Mr. Thoreau repaired to the President, who stated to him the rules and usages, which permitted the loan of books to resident graduates, to clergymen who were alumni, and to some others resident within a circle of ten miles' radius from the College. Mr. Thoreau explained to the President that the railroad had destroyed

the old scale of distances, — that the library was useless, yes, and President and College useless, on the terms of his rules, — that the one benefit he owed to the College was its library, — that, at this moment, not only his want of books was imperative, but he wanted a large number of books, and assured him that he, Thoreau, and not the librarian, was the proper custodian of these. In short, the President found the petitioner so formidable, and the rules getting to look so ridiculous, that he ended by giving him a privilege which in his hands proved unlimited thereafter.

No truer American existed than Thoreau. His preference of his country and condition was genuine, and his aversation from English and European manners and tastes almost reached contempt. He listened impatiently to news or *bonmots* gleaned from London circles; and though he tried to be civil, these anecdotes fatigued him. The men were all imitating each other, and on a small mould. Why can they not live as far apart as possible, and each be a man by himself? What he sought was the most energetic nature; and he wished to go to Oregon, not to London. "In every part of Great Britain," he wrote in his diary, "are discovered

traces of the Romans, their funereal urns, their camps, their roads, their dwellings. But New England, at least, is not based on any Roman ruins. We have not to lay the foundations of our houses on the ashes of a former civilization."

But idealist as he was, standing for abolition of slavery, abolition of tariffs, almost for abolition of government, it is needless to say he found himself not only unrepresented in actual politics, but almost equally opposed to every class of reformers. Yet he paid the tribute of his uniform respect to the Anti-Slavery party. One man, whose personal acquaintance he had formed, he honored with exceptional regard. Before the first friendly word had been spoken for Captain John Brown, he sent notices to most houses in Concord that he would speak in a public hall on the condition and character of John Brown, on Sunday evening, and invited all people to come. The Republican Committee, the Abolitionist Committee, sent him word that it was premature and not advisable. He replied, — "I did not send to you for advice, but to announce that I am to speak." The hall was filled at an early hour by people of all parties, and his earnest eulogy of the hero was heard by all respectfully,

by many with a sympathy that surprised themselves.[1]

It was said of Plotinus that he was ashamed of his body, and 't is very likely he had good reason for it, — that his body was a bad servant, and he had not skill in dealing with the material world, as happens often to men of abstract intellect. But Mr. Thoreau was equipped with a most adapted and serviceable body. He was of short stature, firmly built, of light complexion, with strong, serious blue eyes, and a grave aspect, — his face covered in the late years with a becoming beard. His senses were acute, his frame well-knit and hardy, his hands strong and skilful in the use of tools. And there was a wonderful fitness of body and mind. He could pace sixteen rods more accurately than another man could measure them with rod and chain. He could find his path in the woods at night, he said, better by his feet than his eyes. He could estimate the measure of a tree very well by his eye; he could estimate the weight of a calf or a pig, like a dealer. From a box containing a bushel or more of loose pencils, he could take up with his hands fast enough just a dozen pencils at every grasp. He was a good swimmer, runner, skater, boatman, and would probably outwalk

most countrymen in a day's journey. And the relation of body to mind was still finer than we have indicated. He said he wanted every stride his legs made. The length of his walk uniformly made the length of his writing. If shut up in the house he did not write at all.

He had a strong common sense, like that which Rose Flammock, the weaver's daughter in Scott's romance, commends in her father, as resembling a yardstick, which, whilst it measures dowlas and diaper, can equally well measure tapestry and cloth of gold. He had always a new resource. When I was planting forest trees, and had procured half a peck of acorns, he said that only a small portion of them would be sound, and proceeded to examine them and select the sound ones. But finding this took time, he said, "I think if you put them all into water the good ones will sink;" which experiment we tried with success. He could plan a garden or a house or a barn; would have been competent to lead a "Pacific Exploring Expedition;" could give judicious counsel in the gravest private or public affairs.[1]

He lived for the day, not cumbered and mortified by his memory. If he brought you yesterday a new proposition, he would bring you to-day

another not less revolutionary. A very industrious man, and setting, like all highly organized men, a high value on his time, he seemed the only man of leisure in town, always ready for any excursion that promised well, or for conversation prolonged into late hours. His trenchant sense was never stopped by his rules of daily prudence, but was always up to the new occasion. He liked and used the simplest food, yet, when some one urged a vegetable diet, Thoreau thought all diets a very small matter, saying that "the man who shoots the buffalo lives better than the man who boards at the Graham House." He said, — "You can sleep near the railroad, and never be disturbed: Nature knows very well what sounds are worth attending to, and has made up her mind not to hear the railroad-whistle. But things respect the devout mind, and a mental ecstasy was never interrupted." He noted what repeatedly befell him, that, after receiving from a distance a rare plant, he would presently find the same in his own haunts. And those pieces of luck which happen only to good players happened to him. One day, walking with a stranger, who inquired where Indian arrow-heads could be found, he replied, "Everywhere," and, stooping forward, picked one on the instant from the

ground. At Mount Washington, in Tuckerman's Ravine, Thoreau had a bad fall, and sprained his foot. As he was in the act of getting up from his fall, he saw for the first time the leaves of the *Arnica mollis*.

His robust common sense, armed with stout hands, keen perceptions and strong will, cannot yet account for the superiority which shone in his simple and hidden life. I must add the cardinal fact, that there was an excellent wisdom in him, proper to a rare class of men, which showed him the material world as a means and symbol. This discovery, which sometimes yields to poets a certain casual and interrupted light, serving for the ornament of their writing, was in him an unsleeping insight; and whatever faults or obstructions of temperament might cloud it, he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. In his youth, he said, one day, "The other world is all my art; my pencils will draw no other; my jack-knife will cut nothing else; I do not use it as a means." This was the muse and genius that ruled his opinions, conversation, studies, work and course of life. This made him a searching judge of men. At first glance he measured his companion, and, though insensible to some fine traits of culture, could very well

report his weight and calibre. And this made the impression of genius which his conversation sometimes gave.

He understood the matter in hand at a glance, and saw the limitations and poverty of those he talked with, so that nothing seemed concealed from such terrible eyes. I have repeatedly known young men of sensibility converted in a moment to the belief that this was the man they were in search of, the man of men, who could tell them all they should do. His own dealing with them was never affectionate, but superior, didactic, scorning their petty ways, — very slowly conceding, or not conceding at all, the promise of his society at their houses, or even at his own. "Would he not walk with them?" "He did not know. There was nothing so important to him as his walk; he had no walks to throw away on company." Visits were offered him from respectful parties, but he declined them. Admiring friends offered to carry him at their own cost to the Yellowstone River, — to the West Indies, — to South America. But though nothing could be more grave or considered than his refusals, they remind one, in quite new relations, of that fop Brummel's reply to the gentleman who offered him his carriage in a

shower, "But where will *you* ride, then?" — and what accusing silences, and what searching and irresistible speeches, battering down all defences, his companions can remember![1]

Mr. Thoreau dedicated his genius with such entire love to the fields, hills and waters of his native town, that he made them known and interesting to all reading Americans, and to people over the sea. The river on whose banks he was born and died he knew from its springs to its confluence with the Merrimack. He had made summer and winter observations on it for many years, and at every hour of the day and night. The result of the recent survey of the Water Commissioners appointed by the State of Massachusetts he had reached by his private experiments, several years earlier. Every fact which occurs in the bed, on the banks or in the air over it; the fishes, and their spawning and nests, their manners, their food; the shad-flies which fill the air on a certain evening once a year, and which are snapped at by the fishes so ravenously that many of these die of repletion; the conical heaps of small stones on the river-shallows, the huge nests of small fishes, one of which will sometimes overfill a cart; the birds which frequent the stream, heron, duck, shel-

drake, loon, osprey; the snake, muskrat, otter, woodchuck and fox, on the banks; the turtle, frog, hyla and cricket, which make the banks vocal, — were all known to him, and, as it were, townsmen and fellow creatures; so that he felt an absurdity or violence in any narrative of one of these by itself apart, and still more of its dimensions on an inch-rule, or in the exhibition of its skeleton, or the specimen of a squirrel or a bird in brandy.' He liked to speak of the manners of the river, as itself a lawful creature, yet with exactness, and always to an observed fact. As he knew the river, so the ponds in this region.

One of the weapons he used, more important to him than microscope or alcohol-receiver to other investigators, was a whim which grew on him by indulgence, yet appeared in gravest statement, namely, of extolling his own town and neighborhood as the most favored centre for natural observation. He remarked that the Flora of Massachusetts embraced almost all the important plants of America, — most of the oaks, most of the willows, the best pines, the ash, the maple, the beech, the nuts. He returned Kane's Arctic Voyage to a friend of whom he had borrowed it, with the remark, that " Most of the

phenomena noted might be observed in Concord." He seemed a little envious of the Pole, for the coincident sunrise and sunset, or five minutes' day after six months: a splendid fact, which Annursnuc had never afforded him. He found red snow in one of his walks, and told me that he expected to find yet the *Victoria regia* in Concord. He was the attorney of the indigenous plants, and owned to a preference of the weeds to the imported plants, as of the Indian to the civilized man, and noticed, with pleasure, that the willow bean-poles of his neighbor had grown more than his beans. "See these weeds," he said, "which have been hoed at by a million farmers all spring and summer, and yet have prevailed, and just now come out triumphant over all lanes, pastures, fields and gardens, such is their vigor. We have insulted them with low names, too, — as Pigweed, Wormwood, Chickweed, Shad-blossom." He says, "They have brave names, too, — Ambrosia, Stellaria, Amelanchier, Amaranth, etc." [1]

I think his fancy for referring everything to the meridian of Concord did not grow out of any ignorance or depreciation of other longitudes or latitudes, but was rather a playful expression of his conviction of the indifferency of

all places, and that the best place for each is where he stands. He expressed it once in this wise: "I think nothing is to be hoped from you, if this bit of mould under your feet is not sweeter to you to eat than any other in this world, or in any world."[1]

The other weapon with which he conquered all obstacles in science was patience. He knew how to sit immovable, a part of the rock he rested on, until the bird, the reptile, the fish, which had retired from him, should come back and resume its habits, nay, moved by curiosity, should come to him and watch him.

It was a pleasure and a privilege to walk with him. He knew the country like a fox or a bird, and passed through it as freely by paths of his own. He knew every track in the snow or on the ground, and what creature had taken this path before him. One must submit abjectly to such a guide, and the reward was great. Under his arm he carried an old music-book to press plants; in his pocket, his diary and pencil, a spy-glass for birds, microscope, jack-knife and twine. He wore a straw hat, stout shoes, strong gray trousers, to brave scrub-oaks and smilax, and to climb a tree for a hawk's or a squirrel's nest. He waded into the pool for the water-

plants, and his strong legs were no insignificant part of his armor. On the day I speak of he looked for the Menyanthes, detected it across the wide pool, and, on examination of the florets, decided that it had been in flower five days. He drew out of his breast-pocket his diary, and read the names of all the plants that should bloom on this day, whereof he kept account as a banker when his notes fall due. The Cypripedium not due till to-morrow. He thought that, if waked up from a trance, in this swamp, he could tell by the plants what time of the year it was within two days.[1] The redstart was flying about, and presently the fine grosbeaks, whose brilliant scarlet "makes the rash gazer wipe his eye," and whose fine clear note Thoreau compared to that of a tanager which has got rid of its hoarseness. Presently he heard a note which he called that of the night-warbler, a bird he had never identified, had been in search of twelve years, which always, when he saw it, was in the act of diving down into a tree or bush, and which it was vain to seek; the only bird which sings indifferently by night and by day. I told him he must beware of finding and booking it, lest life should have nothing more to show him. He said,

"What you seek in vain for, half your life, one day you come full upon, all the family at dinner. You seek it like a dream, and as soon as you find it you become its prey."

His interest in the flower or the bird lay very deep in his mind, was connected with Nature, — and the meaning of Nature was never attempted to be defined by him. He would not offer a memoir of his observations to the Natural History Society. "Why should I? To detach the description from its connections in my mind would make it no longer true or valuable to me: and they do not wish what belongs to it." His power of observation seemed to indicate additional senses. He saw as with microscope, heard as with ear-trumpet, and his memory was a photographic register of all he saw and heard. And yet none knew better than he that it is not the fact that imports, but the impression or effect of the fact on your mind. Every fact lay in glory in his mind, a type of the order and beauty of the whole.

His determination on Natural History was organic. He confessed that he sometimes felt like a hound or a panther, and, if born among Indians, would have been a fell hunter. But, restrained by his Massachusetts culture, he played out the

game in this mild form of botany and ichthyology. His intimacy with animals suggested what Thomas Fuller records of Butler the apiologist, that "either he had told the bees things or the bees had told him." Snakes coiled round his legs; the fishes swam into his hand, and he took them out of the water; he pulled the woodchuck out of its hole by the tail, and took the foxes under his protection from the hunters. Our naturalist had perfect magnanimity; he had no secrets: he would carry you to the heron's haunt, or even to his most prized botanical swamp,—possibly knowing that you could never find it again, yet willing to take his risks.

No college ever offered him a diploma, or a professor's chair; no academy made him its corresponding secretary, its discoverer or even its member. Perhaps these learned bodies feared the satire of his presence. Yet so much knowledge of Nature's secret and genius few others possessed; none in a more large and religious synthesis. For not a particle of respect had he to the opinions of any man or body of men, but homage solely to the truth itself; and as he discovered everywhere among doctors some leaning of courtesy, it discredited them. He grew to be revered and admired by his townsmen,

who had at first known him only as an oddity. The farmers who employed him as a surveyor soon discovered his rare accuracy and skill, his knowledge of their lands, of trees, of birds, of Indian remains and the like, which enabled him to tell every farmer more than he knew before of his own farm; so that he began to feel a little as if Mr. Thoreau had better rights in his land than he. They felt, too, the superiority of character which addressed all men with a native authority.

Indian relics abound in Concord, — arrow-heads, stone chisels, pestles and fragments of pottery; and on the river-bank, large heaps of clam-shells and ashes mark spots which the savages frequented. These, and every circumstance touching the Indian, were important in his eyes.[1] His visits to Maine were chiefly for love of the Indian. He had the satisfaction of seeing the manufacture of the bark canoe, as well as of trying his hand in its management on the rapids. He was inquisitive about the making of the stone arrow-head, and in his last days charged a youth setting out for the Rocky Mountains to find an Indian who could tell him that: "It was well worth a visit to California to learn it." Occasionally, a small party of Penob-

scot Indians would visit Concord, and pitch their tents for a few weeks in summer on the river-bank. He failed not to make acquaintance with the best of them; though he well knew that asking questions of Indians is like catechizing beavers and rabbits. In his last visit to Maine he had great satisfaction from Joseph Polis, an intelligent Indian of Oldtown, who was his guide for some weeks.

He was equally interested in every natural fact. The depth of his perception found likeness of law throughout Nature, and I know not any genius who so swiftly inferred universal law from the single fact. He was no pedant of a department. His eye was open to beauty, and his ear to music. He found these, not in rare conditions, but wheresoever he went. He thought the best of music was in single strains; and he found poetic suggestion in the humming of the telegraph-wire.[1]

His poetry might be bad or good; he no doubt wanted a lyric facility and technical skill, but he had the source of poetry in his spiritual perception. He was a good reader and critic, and his judgment on poetry was to the ground of it. He could not be deceived as to the presence or absence of the poetic element in any

composition, and his thirst for this made him negligent and perhaps scornful of superficial graces. He would pass by many delicate rhythms, but he would have detected every live stanza or line in a volume and knew very well where to find an equal poetic charm in prose. He was so enamoured of the spiritual beauty that he held all actual written poems in very light esteem in the comparison. He admired Æschylus and Pindar; but when some one was commending them, he said that Æschylus and the Greeks, in describing Apollo and Orpheus, had given no song, or no good one. "They ought not to have moved trees, but to have chanted to the gods such a hymn as would have sung all their old ideas out of their heads, and new ones in." His own verses are often rude and defective. The gold does not yet run pure, is drossy and crude. The thyme and marjoram are not yet honey. But if he want lyric fineness and technical merits, if he have not the poetic temperament, he never lacks the causal thought, showing that his genius was better than his talent. He knew the worth of the Imagination for the uplifting and consolation of human life, and liked to throw every thought into a symbol.' The fact you tell is of no value, but only the impression. For this reason his

presence was poetic, always piqued the curiosity to know more deeply the secrets of his mind. He had many reserves, an unwillingness to exhibit to profane eyes what was still sacred in his own, and knew well how to throw a poetic veil over his experience. All readers of Walden will remember his mythical record of his disappointments: —

"I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken concerning them, describing their tracks, and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who have heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud; and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves."

His riddles were worth the reading, and I confide that if at any time I do not understand the expression, it is yet just. Such was the wealth of his truth that it was not worth his while to use words in vain. His poem entitled "Sympathy" reveals the tenderness under that triple steel of stoicism, and the intellectual subtility it could animate. His classic poem on "Smoke" suggests Simonides, but is better than any poem of Simonides. His biography is in his verses.

His habitual thought makes all his poetry a hymn to the Cause of causes, the Spirit which vivifies and controls his own: —

> "I hearing get, who had but ears,
> And sight, who had but eyes before;
> I moments live, who lived but years,
> And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore."

And still more in these religious lines: —

> "Now chiefly is my natal hour,
> And only now my prime of life;
> I will not doubt the love untold,
> Which not my worth nor want have bought,
> Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,
> And to this evening hath me brought." [1]

Whilst he used in his writings a certain petulance of remark in reference to churches or churchmen, he was a person of a rare, tender and absolute religion, a person incapable of any profanation, by act or by thought. Of course, the same isolation which belonged to his original thinking and living detached him from the social religious forms. This is neither to be censured nor regretted. Aristotle long ago explained it, when he said, "One who surpasses his fellow citizens in virtue is no longer a part of the city. Their law is not for him, since he is a law to himself."

Thoreau was sincerity itself, and might fortify the convictions of prophets in the ethical laws by his holy living. It was an affirmative experience which refused to be set aside. A truth-speaker he, capable of the most deep and strict conversation; a physician to the wounds of any soul; a friend, knowing not only the secret of friendship, but almost worshipped by those few persons who resorted to him as their confessor and prophet, and knew the deep value of his mind and great heart. He thought that without religion or devotion of some kind nothing great was ever accomplished: and he thought that the bigoted sectarian had better bear this in mind.

His virtues, of course, sometimes ran into extremes. It was easy to trace to the inexorable demand on all for exact truth that austerity which made this willing hermit more solitary even than he wished. Himself of a perfect probity, he required not less of others. He had a disgust at crime, and no worldly success would cover it. He detected paltering as readily in dignified and prosperous persons as in beggars, and with equal scorn. Such dangerous frankness was in his dealing that his admirers called him "that terrible Thoreau," as if he spoke when silent,

and was still present when he had departed. I think the severity of his ideal interfered to deprive him of a healthy sufficiency of human society.[1]

The habit of a realist to find things the reverse of their appearance inclined him to put every statement in a paradox. A certain habit of antagonism defaced his earlier writings, — a trick of rhetoric not quite outgrown in his later, of substituting for the obvious word and thought its diametrical opposite. He praised wild mountains and winter forests for their domestic air, in snow and ice he would find sultriness, and commended the wilderness for resembling Rome and Paris. "It was so dry, that you might call it wet."

The tendency to magnify the moment, to read all the laws of Nature in the one object or one combination under your eye, is of course comic to those who do not share the philosopher's perception of identity. To him there was no such thing as size. The pond was a small ocean; the Atlantic, a large Walden Pond. He referred every minute fact to cosmical laws. Though he meant to be just, he seemed haunted by a certain chronic assumption that the science of the day pretended completeness, and he had just

found out that the *savans* had neglected to discriminate a particular botanical variety, had failed to describe the seeds or count the sepals. "That is to say," we replied, "the blockheads were not born in Concord; but who said they were? It was their unspeakable misfortune to be born in London, or Paris, or Rome; but, poor fellows, they did what they could, considering that they never saw Bateman's Pond, or Nine-Acre Corner, or Becky Stow's Swamp; besides, what were you sent into the world for, but to add this observation?"

Had his genius been only contemplative, he had been fitted to his life, but with his energy and practical ability he seemed born for great enterprise and for command; and I so much regret the loss of his rare powers of action, that I cannot help counting it a fault in him that he had no ambition. Wanting this, instead of engineering for all America, he was the captain of a huckleberry-party. Pounding beans is good to the end of pounding empires one of these days; but if, at the end of years, it is still only beans![1]

But these foibles, real or apparent, were fast vanishing in the incessant growth of a spirit so robust and wise, and which effaced its defeats with new triumphs. His study of Nature was

a perpetual ornament to him, and inspired his friends with curiosity to see the world through his eyes, and to hear his adventures. They possessed every kind of interest.

He had many elegancies of his own, whilst he scoffed at conventional elegance. Thus, he could not bear to hear the sound of his own steps, the grit of gravel ; and therefore never willingly walked in the road, but in the grass, on mountains and in woods. His senses were acute, and he remarked that by night every dwelling-house gives out bad air, like a slaughter-house. He liked the pure fragrance of melilot. He honored certain plants with special regard, and, over all, the pond-lily, — then, the gentian, and the *Mikania scandens*, and "life-everlasting," and a bass-tree which he visited every year when it bloomed, in the middle of July. He thought the scent a more oracular inquisition than the sight, — more oracular and trustworthy. The scent, of course, reveals what is concealed from the other senses. By it he detected earthiness. He delighted in echoes, and said they were almost the only kind of kindred voices that he heard. He loved Nature so well, was so happy in her solitude, that he became very jealous of cities and the sad work which their refinements and artifices made with

man and his dwelling.' The axe was always destroying his forest. "Thank God," he said, "they cannot cut down the clouds!" "All kinds of figures are drawn on the blue ground with this fibrous white paint."

I subjoin a few sentences taken from his unpublished manuscripts, not only as records of his thought and feeling, but for their power of description and literary excellence: —

"Some circumstantial evidence is very strong, as when you find a trout in the milk."

"The chub is a soft fish, and tastes like boiled brown paper salted."

"The youth gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or, perchance, a palace or temple on the earth, and, at length the middle-aged man concludes to build a wood-shed with them."

"The locust z-ing."

"Devil's-needles zigzagging along the Nut-Meadow brook."

"Sugar is not so sweet to the palate as sound to the healthy ear."

"I put on some hemlock-boughs, and the rich salt crackling of their leaves was like mustard to the ear, the crackling of uncountable regiments. Dead trees love the fire."

"The bluebird carries the sky on his back."

"The tanager flies through the green foliage as if it would ignite the leaves."

"If I wish for a horse-hair for my compass-sight I must go to the stable; but the hair-bird, with her sharp eyes, goes to the road."

"Immortal water, alive even to the superficies."

"Fire is the most tolerable third party."

"Nature made ferns for pure leaves, to show what she could do in that line."

"No tree has so fair a bole and so handsome an instep as the beech."

"How did these beautiful rainbow-tints get into the shell of the fresh-water clam, buried in the mud at the bottom of our dark river?"

"Hard are the times when the infant's shoes are second-foot."

"We are strictly confined to our men to whom we give liberty."

"Nothing is so much to be feared as fear. Atheism may comparatively be popular with God himself."

"Of what significance the things you can forget? A little thought is sexton to all the world."

"How can we expect a harvest of thought who have not had a seed-time of character?"

"Only he can be trusted with gifts who can present a face of bronze to expectations."

"I ask to be melted. You can only ask of the metals that they be tender to the fire that melts them. To nought else can they be tender."

There is a flower known to botanists, one of the same genus with our summer plant called "Life-Everlasting," a *Gnaphalium* like that, which grows on the most inaccessible cliffs of the Tyrolese mountains, where the chamois dare hardly venture, and which the hunter, tempted by its beauty, and by his love (for it is immensely valued by the Swiss maidens), climbs the cliffs to gather, and is sometimes found dead at the foot, with the flower in his hand. It is called by botanists the *Gnaphalium leontopodium*, but by the Swiss *Edelweisse*, which signifies *Noble Purity*. Thoreau seemed to me living in the hope to gather this plant, which belonged to him of right. The scale on which his studies proceeded was so large as to require longevity, and we were the less prepared for his sudden disappearance. The country knows not yet, or in the least part, how great a son it has lost. It seems an injury that he should leave in the midst his broken task which none else

can finish, a kind of indignity to so noble a soul that he should depart out of Nature before yet he has been really shown to his peers for what he is. But he, at least, is content. His soul was made for the noblest society; he had in a short life exhausted the capabilities of this world; wherever there is knowledge, wherever there is virtue, wherever there is beauty, he will find a home.'

XVIII

CARLYLE

Hold with the Maker, not the Made,
Sit with the Cause, or grim or glad.

CARLYLE

THOMAS CARLYLE is an immense talker, as extraordinary in his conversation as in his writing, — I think even more so.

He is not mainly a scholar, like the most of my acquaintances, but a practical Scotchman, such as you would find in any saddler's or iron-dealer's shop, and then only accidentally and by a surprising addition, the admirable scholar and writer he is. If you would know precisely how he talks, just suppose Hugh Whelan (the gardener) had found leisure enough in addition to all his daily work to read Plato and Shakspeare, Augustine and Calvin, and, remaining Hugh Whelan all the time, should talk scornfully of all this nonsense of books that he had been bothered with, and you shall have just the tone and talk and laughter of Carlyle. I called him a trip-hammer with "an Æolian attachment." He has, too, the strong religious tinge you sometimes find in burly people. That, and all his qualities, have a certain virulence, coupled though it be in his case with the utmost impatience of Christendom and Jewdom and all existing presentments of the good old story. He talks like a very unhappy

man, — profoundly solitary, displeased and hindered by all men and things about him, and, biding his time, meditating how to undermine and explode the whole world of nonsense which torments him. He is obviously greatly respected by all sorts of people, understands his own value quite as well as Webster, of whom his behavior sometimes reminds me, and can see society on his own terms.[1]

And, though no mortal in America could pretend to talk with Carlyle, who is also as remarkable in England as the Tower of London, yet neither would he in any manner satisfy us (Americans), or begin to answer the questions which we ask. He is a very national figure, and would by no means bear transplantation. They keep Carlyle as a sort of portable cathedral-bell, which they like to produce in companies where he is unknown, and set a-swinging, to the surprise and consternation of all persons, — bishops, courtiers, scholars, writers, — and, as in companies here (in England) no man is named or introduced, great is the effect and great the inquiry. Forster of Rawdon described to me a dinner at the *table d'hôte* of some provincial hotel where he carried Carlyle, and where an Irish canon had uttered something. Carlyle began to

talk, first to the waiters, and then to the walls, and then, lastly, unmistakably to the priest, in a manner that frightened the whole company.

Young men, especially those holding liberal opinions, press to see him, but it strikes me like being hot to see the mathematical or Greek professor before they have got their lesson. It needs something more than a clean shirt and reading German to visit him. He treats them with contempt; they profess freedom and he stands for slavery; they praise republics and he likes the Russian Czar; they admire Cobden and free trade and he is a protectionist in political economy; they will eat vegetables and drink water, and he is a Scotchman who thinks English national character has a pure enthusiasm for beef and mutton, — describes with gusto the crowds of people who gaze at the sirloins in the dealer's shop-window, and even likes the Scotch nightcap; they praise moral suasion, he goes for murder, money, capital punishment and other pretty abominations of English law.' They wish freedom of the press, and he thinks the first thing he would do, if he got into Parliament, would be to turn out the reporters, and stop all manner of mischievous speaking to Buncombe, and wind-bags. "In the Long Parliament," he says,

"the only great Parliament, they sat secret and silent, grave as an ecumenical council, and I know not what they would have done to anybody that had got in there and attempted to tell out of doors what they did." They go for free institutions, for letting things alone, and only giving opportunity and motive to every man; he for a stringent government, that shows people what they must do, and makes them do it. "Here," he says, "the Parliament gathers up six millions of pounds every year to give to the poor, and yet the people starve. I think if they would give it to me, to provide the poor with labor, and with authority to make them work or shoot them, — and I to be hanged if I did not do it, — I could find them in plenty of Indian meal."[1]

He throws himself readily on the other side. If you urge free trade, he remembers that every laborer is a monopolist. The navigation laws of England made its commerce. "St. John was insulted by the Dutch; he came home, got the law passed that foreign vessels should pay high fees, and it cut the throat of the Dutch, and made the English trade." If you boast of the growth of the country, and show him the wonderful results of the census, he finds nothing so depressing as the sight of a great mob. He saw once,

as he told me, three or four miles of human beings, and fancied that "the airth was some great cheese, and these were mites." If a tory takes heart at his hatred of stump-oratory and model republics, he replies, "Yes, the idea of a pig-headed soldier who will obey orders, and fire on his own father at the command of his officer, is a great comfort to the aristocratic mind." It is not so much that Carlyle cares for this or that dogma, as that he likes genuineness (the source of all strength) in his companions.

If a scholar goes into a camp of lumbermen or a gang of riggers, those men will quickly detect any fault of character. Nothing will pass with them but what is real and sound. So this man is a hammer that crushes mediocrity and pretension. He detects weakness on the instant, and touches it. He has a vivacious, aggressive temperament, and unimpressionable. The literary, the fashionable, the political man, each fresh from triumphs in his own sphere, comes eagerly to see this man, whose fun they have heartily enjoyed, sure of a welcome, and are struck with despair at the first onset. His firm, victorious, scoffing vituperation strikes them with chill and hesitation. His talk often reminds you of what was said of Johnson: "If his pistol missed

fire, he would knock you down with the butt-end." [1]

Mere intellectual partisanship wearies him; he detects in an instant if a man stands for any cause to which he is not born and organically committed. A natural defender of anything, a lover who will live and die for that which he speaks for, and who does not care for him or for anything but his own business, he respects; and the nobler this object, of course, the better. He hates a literary trifler, and if, after Guizot had been a tool of Louis Philippe for years, he is now to come and write essays on the character of Washington, on "The Beautiful" and on "Philosophy of History," he thinks that nothing.

Great is his reverence for realities, — for all such traits as spring from the intrinsic nature of the actor. He humors this into the idolatry of strength. A strong nature has a charm for him, previous, it would seem, to all inquiry whether the force be divine or diabolic. He preaches, as by cannonade, the doctrine that every noble nature was made by God, and contains, if savage passions, also fit checks and grand impulses, and, however extravagant, will keep its orbit and return from far.

Nor can that decorum which is the idol of the Englishman, and in attaining which the Englishman exceeds all nations, win from him any obeisance. He is eaten up with indignation against such as desire to make a fair show in the flesh.

Combined with this warfare on respectabilities, and, indeed, pointing all his satire, is the severity of his moral sentiment. In proportion to the peals of laughter amid which he strips the plumes of a pretender and shows the lean hypocrisy to every vantage of ridicule, does he worship whatever enthusiasm, fortitude, love or other sign of a good nature is in a man.'

There is nothing deeper in his constitution than his humor, than the considerate, condescending good nature with which he looks at every object in existence, as a man might look at a mouse. He feels that the perfection of health is sportiveness, and will not look grave even at dulness or tragedy.

His guiding genius is his moral sense, his perception of the sole importance of truth and justice; but that is a truth of character, not of catechisms. He says, "There is properly no religion in England. These idle nobles at Tattersall's — there is no work or word of serious

purpose in them; they have this great lying Church; and life is a humbug." He prefers Cambridge to Oxford, but he thinks Oxford and Cambridge education indurates the young men, as the Styx hardened Achilles, so that when they come forth of them, they say, "Now we are proof; we have gone through all the degrees, and are case-hardened against the veracities of the Universe; nor man nor God can penetrate us."

Wellington he respects as real and honest, and as having made up his mind, once for all, that he will not have to do with any kind of a lie. Edwin Chadwick is one of his heroes, — who proposes to provide every house in London with pure water, sixty gallons to every head, at a penny a week; and in the decay and downfall of all religions, Carlyle thinks that the only religious act which a man nowadays can securely perform is to wash himself well.

Of course the new French revolution of 1848 was the best thing he had seen, and the teaching this great swindler, Louis Philippe, that there is a God's justice in the Universe, after all, was a great satisfaction. Czar Nicholas was his hero; for in the ignominy of Europe, when all thrones fell like card-houses, and no man was found

with conscience enough to fire a gun for his crown, but every one ran away in a *coucou*, with his head shaved, through the Barrière de Passy, one man remained who believed he was put there by God Almighty to govern his empire, and, by the help of God, had resolved to stand there.

He was very serious about the bad times; he had seen this evil coming, but thought it would not come in his time. But now 't is coming, and the only good he sees in it is the visible appearance of the gods. He thinks it the only question for wise men, instead of art and fine fancies and poetry and such things, to address themselves to the problem of society.' This confusion is the inevitable end of such falsehoods and nonsense as they have been embroiled with.

Carlyle has, best of all men in England, kept the manly attitude in his time. He has stood for scholars, asking no scholar what he should say. Holding an honored place in the best society, he has stood for the people, for the Chartist, for the pauper, intrepidly and scornfully, teaching the nobles their peremptory duties.

His errors of opinion are as nothing in comparison with this merit, in my judgment. This *aplomb* cannot be mimicked; it is the speaking to the heart of the thing. And in England,

where the *morgue* of aristocracy has very slowly admitted scholars into society, — a very few houses only in the high circles being ever opened to them, — he has carried himself erect, made himself a power confessed by all men, and taught scholars their lofty duty. He never feared the face of man.[1]

XIX

GEORGE L. STEARNS

"Who, when great trials come,
Nor seeks nor shunnes them; but doth calmly stay
Till he the thing and the example weigh:
All being brought into a summe
What place or person calls for he doth pay."

George Herbert.

GEORGE L. STEARNS

WE do not know how to prize good men until they depart. High virtue has such an air of nature and necessity that to thank its possessor would be to praise the water for flowing or the fire for warming us. But, on the instant of their death, we wonder at our past insensibility, when we see how impossible it is to replace them. There will be other good men, but not these again. And the painful surprise which the last week brought us, in the tidings of the death of Mr. Stearns, opened all eyes to the just consideration of the singular merits of the citizen, the neighbor, the friend, the father and the husband, whom this assembly mourns. We recall the all but exclusive devotion of this excellent man during the last twelve years to public and patriotic interests. Known until that time in no very wide circle as a man of skill and perseverance in his business; of pure life; of retiring and affectionate habits; happy in his domestic relations, — his extreme interest in the national politics, then growing more anxious year by year, engaged him to scan the fortunes of freedom with keener attention. He was an

early laborer in the resistance to slavery. This brought him into sympathy with the people of Kansas. As early as 1855 the Emigrant Aid Society was formed; and in 1856 he organized the Massachusetts State Kansas Committee, by means of which a large amount of money was obtained for the "free-state men," at times of the greatest need. He was the more engaged to this cause by making in 1857 the acquaintance of Captain John Brown, who was not only an extraordinary man, but one who had a rare magnetism for men of character, and attached some of the best and noblest to him, on very short acquaintance, by lasting ties. Mr. Stearns made himself at once necessary to Captain Brown as one who respected his inspirations, and had the magnanimity to trust him entirely, and to arm his hands with all needed help.

For the relief of Kansas, in 1856–57, his own contributions were the largest and the first. He never asked any one to give so much as he himself gave, and his interest was so manifestly pure and sincere that he easily obtained eager offerings in quarters where other petitioners failed. He did not hesitate to become the banker of his clients, and to furnish them money and arms in advance of the subscriptions which he obtained.

His first donations were only entering-wedges of his later; and, unlike other benefactors, he did not give money to excuse his entire preoccupation in his own pursuits, but as an earnest of the dedication of his heart and hand to the interests of the sufferers, — a pledge kept until the success he wrought and prayed for was consummated. In 1862, on the President's first or preliminary Proclamation of Emancipation, he took the first steps for organizing the Freedman's Bureau, — a department which has since grown to great proportions. In 1863 he began to recruit colored soldiers in Buffalo, then at Philadelphia and Nashville. But these were only parts of his work. He passed his time in incessant consultation with all men whom he could reach, to suggest and urge the measures needed for the hour. And there are few men with real or supposed influence, North or South, with whom he has not at some time communicated. Every important patriotic measure in this region has had his sympathy, and of many he has been the prime mover. He gave to each his strong support, but uniformly shunned to appear in public. For himself or his friends he asked no reward; for himself, he asked only to do the hard work. His transparent singleness of

purpose, his freedom from all by-ends, his plain good sense, courage, adherence, and his romantic generosity disarmed, first or last, all gainsayers. His examination before the United States Senate Committee on the Harper's Ferry Invasion, in January, 1860, as reported in the public documents, is a chapter well worth reading, as a shining example of the manner in which a truth-speaker baffles all statecraft, and extorts at last a reluctant homage from the bitterest adversaries.[1]

I have heard, what must be true, that he had great executive skill, a clear method and a just attention to all the details of the task in hand. Plainly he was no boaster or pretender, but a man for up-hill work, a soldier to bide the brunt; a man whom disasters, which dishearten other men, only stimulated to new courage and endeavor.

I have heard something of his quick temper, that he was indignant at this or that man's behavior, but never that his anger outlasted for a moment the mischief done or threatened to the good cause, or ever stood in the way of his hearty coöperation with the offenders when they returned to the path of public duty. I look upon him as a type of the American republican. A man of the people, in strictly private life, girt

with family ties; an active and intelligent manufacturer and merchant, enlightened enough to see a citizen's interest in the public affairs, and virtuous enough to obey to the uttermost the truth he saw, — he became, in the most natural manner, an indispensable power in the state. Without such vital support as he, and such as he, brought to the government, where would that government be? When one remembers his incessant service; his journeys and residences in many states; the societies he worked with; the councils in which he sat; the wide correspondence, presently enlarged by printed circulars, then by newspapers established wholly or partly at his own cost; the useful suggestions; the celerity with which his purpose took form; and his immovable convictions, — I think this single will was worth to the cause ten thousand ordinary partisans, well-disposed enough, but of feebler and interrupted action.

These interests, which he passionately adopted, inevitably led him into personal communication with patriotic persons holding the same views, — with two Presidents, with members of Congress, with officers of the government and of the army, and with leading people everywhere. He had been always a man of simple tastes, and

through all his years devoted to the growing details of his prospering manufactory. But this sudden association now with the leaders of parties and persons of pronounced power and influence in the nation, and the broad hospitality which brought them about his board at his own house or in New York, or in Washington, never altered one feature of his face, one trait of his manners. There he sat in the council, a simple, resolute Republican, an enthusiast only in his love of freedom and the good of men; with no pride of opinion, and with this distinction, that, if he could not bring his associates to adopt his measure, he accepted with entire sweetness the next best measure which could secure their assent. But these public benefits were purchased at a severe cost. For a year or two, the most affectionate and domestic of men became almost a stranger in his beautiful home. And it was too plain that the excessive toil and anxieties, into which his ardent spirit led him, overtasked his strength and wore out prematurely his constitution. It is sad that such a life should end prematurely; but when I consider that he lived long enough to see with his own eyes the salvation of his country, to which he had given all his heart; that he did not know an idle day;

was never called to suffer under the decays and loss of his powers, or to see that others were waiting for his place and privilege, but lived while he lived, and beheld his work prosper for the joy and benefit of all mankind, — I count him happy among men.

Almost I am ready to say to these mourners, Be not too proud in your grief, when you remember that there is not a town in the remote State of Kansas that will not weep with you as at the loss of its founder; not a Southern State in which the freedmen will not learn to-day from their preachers that one of their most efficient benefactors has departed, and will cover his memory with benedictions; and that, after all his efforts to serve men without appearing to do so, there is hardly a man in this country worth knowing who does not hold his name in exceptional honor. And there is to my mind somewhat so absolute in the action of a good man that we do not, in thinking of him, so much as make any question of the future. For the Spirit of the Universe seems to say: "He has done well; is not that saying all?"

NOTES

NOTES

DEMONOLOGY

MR. EMERSON gave a course of ten lectures on Human Life, in Boston in the winter of 1838–39, of which "Demonology" was the last. In 1877 it was published in the *North American Review*. Much of the matter was drawn from his journals of 1837 and 1838. At that time Mesmerism, Animal Magnetism and Clairvoyance were attracting much attention, and wizards, male and female, found Boston a good field for their arts, and excited the curiosity and obtained the credence even of some persons of culture and religious character.

When the lecture was revised for publication as an essay, so-called "Spiritualism" — Mr. Emerson always spoke of it as "Spiritism" — had, from its humble beginnings in the "Rochester Knockings," spread far and wide in the United States, and invaded England also; so passages from journals between the years 1850 and 1860 referring to it were introduced. It appears also that one or two pages in "Spiritual Laws," in the first series of Essays, were transferred thither from "Demonology," the lecture which followed it in the course.

Page 3, note 1. Taylor's *Philip van Artevelde*, Act IV., Scene 1.

Page 4, note 1. Scott, *Lady of the Lake*, canto 1.

Page 5, note 1. Journal, September, 1866. "Struggled hard last night in a dream to repeat and save a thought or sentence spoken in the dream; but it eluded me at last: only came out of the pulling with this rag, —

"'his the deeper problem,
But mine the better ciphered.'"

Mr. Emerson was a good sleeper, yet had, at least at certain periods, frequent and vivid dreams. These were due to the activity of his imagination, for his fare was simple, and he was remarkably temperate in his eating and drinking. He often wrote, however, until late in the evening. His journals show that he was greatly interested in the psychology of his dreams; — how it was that he, a minor actor, and the guest, or often the victim, in the pleasing or startling drama, should have created the characters, painted the scene and furnished the dialogue.

In the journal for 1851 he wrote: —

"My dreams are somewhat arch and satirical, if I dare give them all the meaning they will bear. If they mean anything, they are surprising bits, yet by no means from a divine plane, but from a great sagacity on the Franklin level. This confusion in counting New Hampshire bills was an example — they had a varying value, twenty different figures on the corners."

Two years earlier, he copied these pleasing lines from Ford's play *The Sun's Darling*: —

"I have found
More sweets in one unprofitable dream
Than in my life's whole pilgrimage."

Page 6, note 1. This thought came to him early, for in 1833, after seeing the ascending steps of animal forms in the Museum of the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, he wrote in his journal: "We feel that there is an occult relation between the very worm, the crawling scorpion and man. I am moved to strange sympathies." These extended far, for in the "Bacchus" he wrote: —

And the poor grass shall plot and plan
What it will do when it is man;

and in a lecture, in 1836, on the Humanity of Science, speaking of Lamarck's theories: "He says to the caterpillar, 'How dost thou, brother? Please God you shall yet be a philosopher.'"

Page 7, note 1. Calidasa or Kâlidasa, an East Indian poet whose writings have great beauty and charm. His principal work is the *Sakuntala*.

In the little poem on Birds ("Fragments on Nature," *Poems*, Appendix) they are called —

Gems in Nature's cabinet;
These the fables she esteems
Reality most like to dreams.

Page 8, note 1. This is Mr. Emerson's favorite doctrine of Compensation, and he was greatly interested in the symbolism of the phenomenon of Polarity (see *Nature, Addresses and Lectures*, p. 98).

In his speech on the Fugitive Slave Law, he quotes from Æschylus these lines: —

"For evil word shall evil word be said,
For murder-stroke a murder-stroke be paid,
Who smites must smart."

Page 10, note 1. The thought of this paragraph is contained in the poem "Fate," especially in its conclusion: —

For the prevision is allied
Unto the thing so signified;
Or say, the foresight that awaits
Is the same Genius that creates.

Page 10, note 2.

You doubt we read the stars on high,
Nathless we read your fortunes true;
The stars may hide in the upper sky,
But without glass we fathom you.
"The Romany Girl," *Poems.*

Page 11, note 1. The office of the poet is to read the

Delicate omens traced in air.

See the motto to "Fate" in *Conduct of Life.*

Page 11, note 2. From George Herbert's poem "Man," several verses of which are given in *Nature, Addresses and Lectures,* p. 68.

Page 12, note 1. Mr. Emerson says this again in a fragment of verse: —

This passing moment is an edifice
Which the Omnipotent cannot rebuild.

Page 13, note 1. The pine-tree in "Woodnotes" sings, not of a *fiat* Creation, but

Of tendency through endless ages.

Page 13, note 2. See in the *Poems* (Appendix, "Fragments on the Poet") the verses beginning

For what need I of book or priest,
Or sibyl from the mummied East?

Page 13, note 3.

Εἷς οἰωνὸς ἄριστος, ἀμύνεσθαι περὶ πάτρης.
Iliad, XIII., 243.

Page 14, note 1. Mr. Emerson quotes this story from Montaigne.

Page 15, note 1. Hecateus, a philosopher and disciple of the skeptic Pyrrho, accompanied Alexander the Great on his Asiatic conquest. He wrote on the Hyperboreans and also on Egypt.

Page 18, note 1. Goethe, *Wahrheit und Dichtung*, bk. xx.

Page 19, note 1. In his journal, Mr. Emerson makes magnetism a gift of the Prince of the Power of the Air; the purest men have it not. He cites Andrew Jackson as an instance of the magnetic man.

Page 20, note 1. Something like this is said in the poem on Nature, who, —

> by marvel of her own,
> Strikes the loud pretender down.
> For Nature listens in the rose
> And hearkens in the berry's bell
> To help her friends, to plague her foes,
> And like wise God she judges well.
>
> "Nature," I., *Poems*.

Page 20, note 2. Quoted from Heracleitus.

Page 20, note 3. Gyges is told of by Herodotus. Plato tells of his obtaining the ring, and with it invisibility, the criminal use of which obtained a queen and kingdom. Peter Schlemihl, the man without a shadow, is the hero of a tale by Chemisso.

Page 22, note 1. In the essay in the first series on Spiritual Laws is a similar passage, where it is said that every man has his proper call, but "the pretence that he has another call, a summons by name and personal election and outward 'signs that mark him extraordinary and not in the roll of common men,' is fanaticism, and betrays obtuseness to perceive that

there is one mind in all the individuals, and no respect of persons therein." The quotation in both passages is from the braggart speeches of Glendower in Shakspeare, *Henry IV.*, Part I., Act III., Scene I. A similar passage, probably once part of "Demonology," and having also a reference to dreams, is on page 148 of "Spiritual Laws."

Page 23, note 1. Mr. Emerson elsewhere quotes a saying attributed to Pindar, that "Zeus hates busybodies and those who do too much." Unhappily modern scholars think that Pindar's fragmentary line probably had no such charming significance.

The last two lines of this paragraph suggest what Mr. Emerson says of "The Poet" (*Poems*, Appendix), — his submissive willingness

> to adjourn
> To infinite time his eager turn,
> His lot of action from the urn.

Page 24, note 1. The Latin quotation from Cicero, criticising Epicurus, might be rendered, Unconsciousness is an element of what is great and generous.

Ralph Cudworth, an English clergyman (1617–88), wrote *The True Intellectual System of the Universe* and *A Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*. It was not Cudworth, however, but his quotations, especially from Plato, that delighted Emerson in his college days. In the journal of 1845 he wrote: "I know no book so difficult to read as Cudworth proper. For as it is a magazine of quotations, of extraordinary ethical sentences, the shining summits of ancient philosophy, and as Cudworth himself is a dull writer, the eye of the reader rests habitually on these wonderful revelations and refuses to be withdrawn."

Patrick Colquhoun of Dumbarton, Scotland (1745–1820),

was a police magistrate and wrote on economic subjects, criminals and pauperism in Great Britain. He lived for a time in Virginia in his youth.

Page 24, note 2. Journal, 1866. "Incredulity of truth is apt to be accompanied by credulity of much nonsense, as in our skeptics in religion who go blind into Mr. Lister's astrology, and Mr. Hume's mesmerism."

Page 25, note 1. When, in 1852, the "rat and mouse revelation" reached Concord, its disciples were, for the most part, of a kind that justified Mr. Emerson's remarks, and Judge Hoar's observation that, "if this were a treasure, it came to us in earthen vessels."

Of these manifestations Thoreau wrote to his sister, —

"Concord is just as idiotic as ever in relation to the spirits and their knockings. Most people here believe in a spiritual world which no respectable junk-bottle which had not met with a slip would condescend to for a moment — whose atmosphere would extinguish a candle let down into it like a well that wants airing; in spirits which the very bull-frogs in our meadows would blackball. Their evil genius is seeing how low it can degrade them. The hooting of owls, the croaking of frogs, is celestial wisdom in comparison. If I could be brought to believe in the things which they believe, I should make haste to sell out my stock in this and the next world's enterprises and buy a share in the first Immediate Annihilation Company that offered. I would exchange my immortality for a glass of small beer this hot weather. Where *are* the heathen? Was there ever superstition before? And yet I suppose there may be a vessel this very moment setting sail from the coast of North America to that of Africa with a missionary on board. Consider the dawn and the sunrise — the rainbow and the evening — the words of Christ and the aspirations of all the saints!

Hear music! see, smell, taste, feel, hear — anything — and then hear these idiots, inspired by the cracking of a restless board, humbly asking, 'Please, Spirit, if you cannot answer by knocks, answer by tips of the table' ! ! ! ! ! !" — *Thoreau's Letters.*

Page 26, note 1. Hotspur's answer to his anxious wife, begging him to confide in her the cause of his restlessness while he was planning revolt against the king. — *Henry IV.*, Part I., Act II., Scene 3.

Page 27, note 1. "These revelations . . . do not answer the questions which the understanding asks. The soul answers never by words, but by the thing itself that is inquired after. Revelation is the disclosure of the soul. The popular notion of a revelation is that it is a telling of fortunes. . . . We must check this low curiosity. An answer in words is delusive; it is really no answer to the questions you ask."

This passage is from "The Over-Soul," *Essays, First Series*, where on pages 269 and 270 is much matter akin to this essay.

Page 28, note 1. Mr. Emerson had a great liking for the epilogue to Beaumont and Fletcher's play, *The Honest Man's Fortune*, especially the lines: —

> "Man is his own star, and the soul that can
> Render an honest and a perfect man
> Commands all light, all influence, all fate:
> Nothing to him falls early, or too late.
> Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
> Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."

Page 28, note 2. Impatient as he was of quackery in things spiritual, and unattractive as semi-physiological matters were to him naturally, he knew that unexplained phenomena

would yet receive their solution in accordance with beautiful and universal law. An extract from his journal of 1842 is here given: —

"How slowly, how slowly we learn that witchcraft and ghostcraft, palmistry and magic and all the other scattered superstitions, which, with so much police, boastful skepticism and scientific committees, we had finally dismissed to the moon as nonsense, are really no nonsense at all, but subtle and valid influences, always starting up, mowing, muttering in our path and shading our day. The things are real, only they have shed their skin, which with much insult we have gibbeted and buried. One person fastens an eye on us and the very graves of the memory render up their dead, the secrets that make us wretched either to keep or to betray must be betrayed; and another person fastens an eye on us, and we cannot speak a syllable, and the very bones of the body seem to lose their cartilages."

See also "Nominalist and Realist" in *Essays, Second Series*, pp. 234, 235.

ARISTOCRACY

On his second visit to England, whither he had been invited by his friends, Alexander Ireland of Manchester and Thomas Carlyle, to give some lectures, Mr. Emerson wrote to his wife on February 10, 1848: "I have written a lecture on Natural Aristocracy, which I am to read at Edinburgh to-morrow, and interpolated beside some old webs with patches of new tapestry, contrary to old law."

The title "Natural Aristocracy" was given to make it the more intelligible to the English hearers; "The New Aris-

tocracy" was at first contemplated. The lecture was the sixth and last of the course given in June, in London, before a somewhat select audience, including many titled persons, at the Portman Square Literary and Scientific Institution.

Of this essay, Dr. Holmes said, "Let him who wishes to know what the word means to an American whose life has come from New England soil, whose ancestors have breathed New England air for many generations, read it, and he will find a new interpretation of a very old and often greatly wronged appellation."

With regard to the Portman Square audience, Mr. Cabot says in his Memoir: —

"'The English aristocracy,' Emerson remarks in *English Traits*, 'have never been addicted to contemplation;' and Emerson's idealism, thus abruptly presented, was not calculated to win them to it. . . . Emerson's London audience, to be sure, would probably in any case have given themselves but little concern with his ideas; it was not the ideas, but the man, that attracted them, so far as they were attracted."

The essay as here presented by no means represents the lecture read in England. The subject, under whatever name, — Being *versus* Seeming, Heroism, Self-Reliance, Character, Greatness, — was one that he continually wrote upon from the days when, a student at Harvard, he stood at his tall desk in Hollis Hall (number 15), writing his thoughts by the dawn of a winter's morning. Much matter accumulated, and selections from many sheets were variously grouped, to be read in different years to differing companies under the title "Aristocracy." Mr. Cabot skilfully incorporated the best later fragments with the substance of the English lecture.

Page 34, note 1. Professor N. S. Shaler, in his *Interpre-*

tation of Nature, well illustrates the point that the facts of Evolution and Heredity make morals more essential than does the Biblical account of Creation.

Page 36, note 1. Mr. Emerson said of Sir Walter Scott: "His power on the public mind rests on the singular union of two influences. By nature, by his reading and taste an aristocrat, in a time and country which easily gave him that bias, he had the virtues and graces of that class, and by his eminent humanity and his love of labor escaped its harm." — "Walter Scott," *Miscellanies*.

Page 37, note 1. This paragraph suggests Guy, the "mortal mixed of middle clay," in the *Poems*.

Page 38, note 1.

> So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
> So near is God to man,
> When Duty whispers low, Thou must,
> The youth replies, I can.
>
> "Voluntaries," *Poems*.

Page 39, note 1.

> And through man and woman and sea and star
> Saw the dance of Nature forward and far.
>
> "The Poet," *Poems*, Appendix.

Page 41, note 1. Eight years after leaving England, when *English Traits* was published, Mr. Emerson wrote in his journal concerning our own country: —

"The detachment of the Puritans without aristocracy must be as great a gain to mankind as the opening of that continent, and though tender people may object to us an aristocracy of wealth, — if you think what that means, — opportunity, free trade and bringing all the powers to the surface, — it is what all aim at."

It is needless to say that, writing in the simpler days of the Republic, he had not in mind the overgrown fortunes of the present era of materialism. The "wealth" he had in mind was of the moderate sort that helps to well-being.

Page 42, note 1. Southey's *Chronicle of the Cid* was a favorite book; Mr. Emerson liked to read fine passages from it to his children, and also from the old French *Chanson de Roland* the account of the hero, overwhelmed in the pass of Roncesvalles by the Moors through Ganelon's treachery, though wounded to death, standing by his dying friend Oliver and blowing on "the oliphant" the

> "blast of that dread horn,
> On Fontarabian echoes borne,
> That to King Charles did come."
>
> "Marmion."

Page 43, note 1. There is much about Temperament in the essays, especially in "Fate" (*Conduct of Life*). See also in the *Poems*, in the "Fragments on Life," the lines beginning,—

> From the stores of eldest matter,
> The deep-eyed flame, obedient water.

Page 44, note 1. Shakspeare, *Coriolanus*, Act IV., Scene 7.

Page 44, note 2. In the journal of 1852 there is a passage on "Fate which appears in statistics; exalts races by a cellule in their brain; that makes certain families miners, and others hunters, and levies her own tariffs by making dreadful boundaries of her own," etc.

Page 45, note 1.

> "Nothing to him falls early or too late."

Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Honest Man's Fortune*, Epilogue.

Page 45, note 2. This phrase is quoted from the speech

on the scaffold by Richard Rumbold, one of Cromwell's soldiers of extreme Republican views. He served at Dunbar and Worcester, and was one of the guard around the scaffold of Charles I. After the Restoration he was engaged in a conspiracy to assassinate Charles II. and the Duke of York. When the plot was discovered he escaped to Holland, but later, while serving in the army of the Duke of Argyll, was captured, tried and executed. On the scaffold he scoffed at the divine right of kings, and said, "I am sure there was no man born marked of God above another."

Page 46, note 1. In a stray fragment of the beginning of "Natural Aristocracy," as given in the United States, is the following sentence which also evidently appeared in the lecture as given in Boston: "I am well aware that, in almost every town in the world but our towns, there would be a sort of insult and cruelty in speaking to a great mixed audience on the opportunities and duties of the favored classes."

Page 47, note 1. This was Thoreau's saying.

Page 49, note 1. A good story relating to the price of men is given in *Representative Men*, p. 152.

Page 50, note 1. "The one serious and formidable thing in nature is a will." See *Conduct of Life*, p. 30.

Page 52, note 1. Journal, 1831. "He that does nothing is poorer than he that has nothing." See also p. 232 in "Worship" (*Conduct of Life*).

Mr. Emerson wrote in his journal for 1866: —

"Aristocracy is always timid. After I had read my lecture on Natural Aristocracy in London and had said, after describing the 'man without duties,' 'Who can blame the peasant if he fires his barns?' etc., Lord Morpeth came to see me at Chapman's, and hoped I would leave out that passage if I repeated the lecture."

The aristocracy were much alarmed at this time. Across the Channel, in France, a revolution was going on, and in England the Chartist demonstrations caused grave anxiety.

In a letter which Mr. Emerson wrote to his wife from London, March 23, 1848, he tells of this state of affairs, and adds: —

"One thing is certain; that, if the peace of England should be broken up, the aristocracy here — or, I should say, the rich — are stout-hearted, and as ready to fight for their own as the poor; are not likely to run away."

Page 54, note 1. This was Professor Louis Agassiz, who at that time was delighting the audiences of country lyceums, familiar enough with woodchucks, robins, pickerel and river-turtles, with his classifications and descriptions of radiates, mollusks and articulates. His charming presence, his interesting foreign accent, his enthusiasm and his ready drawing swept all before him.

Page 55, note 1. "It will not be doubted, that, if a beautiful person is born into a family, a new career is opened for that person, — an influence which no reasoning and no legislating could hinder, and which must remain a differencing, that is, an aristocratic quality."— Stray sheet from "Beauty."

Page 55, note 2. I find this passage on a stray sheet, followed, however, by the sentence beginning the next paragraph here: —

"Will any one question the uses of an aristocracy? Not while there is any remainder of the substance in the form. For the name is a verdict. The noble ennobles. That is his use. Can there be any greater?"

Page 57, note 1. After a parlor-lecture in a Western city, some metaphysicians with taste for dialectics undertook to make Mr. Emerson defend his thesis and prove his utterances.

He said, with amused good nature, when he came home, "Their logicians rolled me in the dust."

Page 57, note 2. This was a counsel in accordance with his own practice, steadily urged upon all who sought his advice, — Do not make the mistake of assuming chivalries not proper to you.

Page 57, note 3.

> Who bides at home, nor looks abroad,
> Carries the eagles and masters the sword.
>
> "Destiny," *Poems.*

Page 58, note 1. This was Mrs. Barbauld's line, in her poem "The Brook": —

> "And the more falls I get move faster on."

Mr. Emerson made it one of his mottoes in life.

Page 58, note 2. Ali ben Abu Taleb, son-in-law of Mahomet, and fourth Caliph, called for his courage "The Lion of God." Mahomet said of him, "I am the city of knowledge, but Ali is the gate." He is often mentioned in Mr. Emerson's writings.

Journal, 1845. "The Caliph Ali is a fine example of character. 'He possessed a vein of poignant humour which led Soliman Farsy to say of a jest he one day indulged in, "This it is which has kept you back to the fourth" (Abu Beker Oman and Othman having been successively elected before him), for a reliance on his rights of sovereignty was the ruling feeling of that sacred person, and it is one which gives ascendance to the inner and individual nature in opposition to the suggestions of appearance and the observance of our relations with the many.'

"Mahomet said, 'Various are the Virtues, O Ali, by which men are brought near to their Creator, but thou by thy in-

tellect art created near, and standest before them by many degrees of approach.' "

The quotations come from the *Akhlak-i-Jalaly*, translated by W. F. Thomson (London, 1839). It is a Persian work of the fifteenth century, tracing its origin to an Arabic work five centuries older, which was an "effort to reconcile Greek Philosophy with the social and religious systems of the Mohammedans." Mr. Emerson alludes to this in "Plato," *Representative Men*, p. 40.

Page 62, note 1. The sneer was an impossibility to Mr. Emerson. In a note-book of 1827 he says of a man of the world: "If his opinions shall turn out right, he betrays his imperfections of mind by a sneer."

Page 63, note 1. He always guarded his independence on every question. He said, "The relation of men of thought to society is always the same; they refuse that necessity of mediocre men, to take sides."

PERPETUAL FORCES

President Lincoln appointed the thirteenth day of April, 1862, as a Day of Fasting and Prayer, recommending to the Country to take thankful remembrance of the better aspect of our affairs at that early stage of the War of the Rebellion.

On that day Mr. Emerson read before the Twenty-eighth Congregational Society (Theodore Parker's), at the Music Hall in Boston, an address called "Moral Forces." It was a subject on which his mind dwelt especially then, for in the war he saw the revulsion due to these forces heralding better days, and in his lectures during the darker days which followed, he dwelt on their sure action, to encourage the people.

In the late autumn of the same year, he gave the lecture "Perpetual Forces," in the Fraternity Course in Boston. His note-book, begun the following year, 1863, is called "Forces and Forms." Its mottoes are "An arch never sleeps," and "Every man requires, or lives from, the whole world." It is full of interesting passages on the greater forces, and the essay as it stands, made no doubt from the two lectures, was reinforced from these notes for publication in the *North American Review* in 1877.

Page 69, note 1. The advantage and blessing of poverty are emphasized by Mr. Emerson in the essay on Domestic Life. Also in "Worship," in the same volume (*Conduct of Life*), he says: "Thus can the faithful student reverse all the warnings of his early instinct under the guidance of a deeper instinct. He learns to welcome misfortune, learns that adversity is the prosperity of the great."

Page 70, note 1.

Ever the Rock of Ages melts
Into the mineral air,
To be the quarry whence to build
Thought and its mansions fair.

"Fragments on Life," *Poems*, Appendix.

Page 71, note 1. Compare in the essay on Farming, in *Society and Solitude*, the passage, "Who are the farmer's servants?" etc.

Page 72, note 1.

Thou seek'st in globe and galaxy,
He hides in pure transparency;
Thou askest in fountains and in fires,
He is the essence that inquires.

"Woodnotes," II., *Poems*.

Page 74, note 1. Mr. Emerson loved to see that it was alike true of farmer, engineer or poet, that

> He planted where the Deluge ploughed,
> His hired hands were wind and cloud;
> His eyes detect the Gods concealed
> In the hummock of the field.
>
> "Fragments on the Poet," *Poems*, Appendix.

Page 79, note 1.

> The archangel Hope
> Looks to the azure cope,
> Waits through dark ages for the morn,
> Defeated day by day, but unto victory born.
>
> "Fragments on Life," *Poems*, Appendix.

Page 80, note 1.

> For the world was built in order,
> And the atoms march in tune;
> Rhyme the pipe, and Time the warder,
> The sun obeys them and the moon.
>
> "Monadnoc," *Poems*.

Page 82, note 1. This passage in the manuscript is followed by, "To prize sensibility, see the subjects of the poet; they were insignificant until he raised them."

Page 83, note 1. "'You tell me a great deal of what the devil does, and what power he has: When did you hear from Christ last?' asked Father Taylor of some Calvinistic friends." —Notes on Forces.

Page 84, note 1. Mr. Emerson elsewhere quotes Bacon to the effect that Nature is to be commanded by obeying her. In the essay on Worship, in *Conduct of Life*, he says that "the last lesson in life, the Choral Song which rises from all the elements and all the angels, is a voluntary obedience, a necessitated

freedom. Man is made of the same atoms as the world is; he shares the same impressions, predispositions and destiny."

Page 86, note 1. In the lecture on the National Fast Day alluded to in the note at the opening of this essay, was the following kindred passage on the urgent conditions of the day: —

"Let us rejoice in every success and in every overthrow, which a wise and good soul, whether among our enemies or in other nations, would see to be for the right, for ideas, for the good of humanity. We are rightly glad only in as far as we believe that the victories of our cause are real grounds of joy for all mankind. . . . Things point the right way. A position is taken by the American Executive, — that is much; and it has been supported by the legislature. What an amount of power released from doing harm and now ready to do good! The world is nothing but a bundle of forces, and all the rest is a clod which it uses. In all works of man there is a constant resistance to be overcome and constant loss by friction. But the tree rises into the air without any violence, by its own unfolding, which is as easy as shining is to the sun, or warming to fire. It is the same with the moral forces. People, in proportion to their intelligence and virtue, are friends to a good measure, whilst any wrong measure will find a hitch somewhere. Inspiration and sympathy — these are the cords that draw power to the front, and not the harness of the cannon. . . .

"We are listless and apologizing and imitating; we are straws and nobodies, — and then the mighty thought comes sailing on a silent wind and fills us with its virtue."

Page 86, note 2. Another note on Forces from those made in 1863: —

"My point is, that the movement of the whole machine,

the motive force of life, and of every particular life, is moral. The world stands on our thoughts, and not on iron or cotton; and the iron of iron, the fire of fire, the ether and source of all the elements is moral forces."

Page 88, note 1. In allusion to Rufus Choate's flippant allusion to the declaration of the rights of man in the Preamble to the Constitution, Mr. Emerson said, "Only the great generalizations survive. The sharp words of the Declaration of Independence, lampooned then and since as 'glittering generalities,' have turned out blazing ubiquities that will burn forever and ever." [1]

The passage in "Voluntaries" is here suggested, beginning, —

Great men in the Senate sate.

Page 88, note 2. Thoreau said, "If you have built castles in the air, that is where they should be; *now put the foundations under them.*"

This note from the manuscript "Forces" may be added here: —

"Family likeness in the Greek gods. Socrates says, 'the laws below are sisters of the laws above.' So really are the material elements of close affinity to the moral elements. But they are not their copies, but they are themselves. They are the same laws acting on superior and inferior planes. On the lower plane, it is called Heat; on the higher, Love. Whenever you enunciate a physical law, I hear in it a moral rule."

[1] This was in a lecture on Books given in the Fraternity Course in Boston in 1864. See Mr. Cabot's *Memoir of Emerson*, vol. ii., p. 790, but it is probable that this sentence had been uttered in more direct retort to Mr. Choate's words years before, and was only used again in the lecture.

CHARACTER

This essay was the concluding lecture of a course given before the Parker Fraternity in Boston by Mr. Emerson, in the winter of 1864–65. It was printed in the *North American Review* in April, 1866. It might have been as fitly called "The Sovereignty of Ethics" as the essay which bears that name.

The reader is referred to the chapter on the same subject, printed in the second series of Essays in 1844.

Page 92, note 1. The Marquis de Vauvenargues (1715–1747) was a Provençal writer on Morals, and the correspondent of Voltaire and Mirabeau.

Page 95, note 1. Wordsworth's "Ode to Immortality."

Page 96, note 1. This convertibility of Truth, Goodness and Beauty, making a trinity of Moral Force, appears in the chapter on Spirit, in "Nature," in the first pages of "The Poet" in the second series of Essays, and elsewhere in Mr. Emerson's writings.

Page 96, note 2. This is the quatrain "Sacrifice," in the *Poems*.

Page 97, note 1. In the Address to the Divinity Students (*Nature, Addresses and Lectures*, pp. 128, 129), Mr. Emerson set forth this thought more fully.

Page 98, note 1. The charges of blasphemy against Empedocles and Socrates, and even against Jesus, were on the same ground. In a sermon note-book and journal kept by Mr. Emerson in 1828, he wrote: —

"I find a kindling excitement in the thought that the feeling which prompts a child to an act of generosity is the same which guides an archangel to his awful duties: that in the humblest transaction in which we can engage we can introduce these stupendous laws which make the sovereignty of the creation the character of God. It seems to me, in obeying them, in squaring my conduct by them, I part with the weakness of humanity. I exchange the rags of Nature for a portion of the majesty of my Maker. I am backed by the Universe. I lean on omnipotence."

Page 99, note 1. In the journal for 1856 he wrote cheerfully: "I have been writing or speaking what were once called novelties for twenty-five or thirty years, and I have not now one disciple." He only wished people to go to the fountain-head themselves: that practice was all he wished to convert others to.

Page 100, note 1. Mr. Emerson liked to recognize what was best in his friends, the great and universal part, and ignore their weakness. The following is from a sheet marked "Character:" —

"I see only two or three persons and allow them all their room: they spread themselves at large to the horizon. If I looked at many, as you do, or compared these habitually with others, these would look less. Yet are they not entitled to this munificence? Is it not their own? Is not munificence the only insight?

"Our exaggeration of all fine characters arises from this, that we identify each in turn with the Soul. Presently the individual warps and shrinks away, and we accuse him. Hard to find an ideal in history. By courtesy we call saints and heroes such, but they are very defective characters; I cannot easily find a man I would be."

Page 101, note 1. It is difficult to say whether these lines are a free translation, or only inspired by Mr. Emerson's Oriental readings. They appear in the verse-book, as if meant to show the joy that came from converse with God in Nature, as a concluding verse of an early form of "My Garden," printed now in the Appendix to the *Poems* under the name of "Walden."

Page 101, note 2. This was his own method. He read in Plato, Proclus, Æschylus, Dante, Shakspeare, Swedenborg "for lustres," or, as he put it to a young friend, "Only read to start your own team."

Page 102, note 1.

> Yon water-flags, yon sighing osier,
> A drop can shake, a breath can fan;
> Maidens sigh and weep: Composure
> Is the prudency of man."
>
> "The Poet," *Poems*, Appendix.

Page 104, note 1. Mr. Emerson used to laugh over Béranger's "Le bon Dieu," and Swift's irreverent picturing of the last judgment, which he printed in *Parnassus* under the title "Jove and the Souls."

Page 106, note 1. His Aunt Mary Emerson's journals were rich with the imagery of the old religion, drawn from the Old and New Testaments and from Milton.

Page 107, note 1. In the diary of Rev. William Emerson of Concord, Mr. Emerson's grandfather, it appears that during the excited month preceding the outbreak of the Revolution at the Old North Bridge, his first sermon, with the purpose of arousing the freemen to take up arms, met with only moderate success, but in the course of a week he joined forces with a neighboring minister and they had an all-day preach-

ing; result, "Minute men enlisted to the number of one hundred or more."

Page 110, note 1. Compare the passage about "mere morality," in "Worship," *Conduct of Life*, p. 215.

Page 111, note 1. This paragraph comes from the journal of 1845. At the time that it was written, with the apt quotation from Von Ense, Theodore Parker was one of the most active and earnest preachers of the Gospel in Massachusetts, though called an infidel.

Page 111, note 2. In *Representative Men* Mr. Emerson expressed his impatience of Swedenborg's exclusive Hebraism in his writings.

Page 113, note 1.

> The rules to men made evident
> By Him who built the day,
> The columns of the firmament
> Not firmer based than they.

Page 115, note 1. In his Divinity School Address Mr. Emerson called Jesus the friend of man. When it was printed, Miss Elizabeth Peabody begged him to write "Friend" instead of "friend." "No," he answered; "if I did, they would all go to sleep."

Page 116, note 1. Dr. Charles T. Jackson, Mrs. Emerson's brother, when a boy, was, with several others, the pupil of the excellent but eccentric Dr. Alleyne of Duxbury. One Sunday the boys, accompanying their reverend friend to afternoon service in a time of drouth, each carried a large umbrella under his arm. "Boys!" said the Doctor, "what nonsense is this?" "Why, Doctor, you prayed for rain this morning." "Pshaw! pshaw! boys; it's customary!"

Page 117, note 1. Journal, 1839. "The Sabbath is my

best debt to the Past, and binds me to some gratitude still. It brings me that frankincense out of a sacred antiquity."

Page 119, note 1. Milton, "Vacation Exercises," not quite correctly quoted.

Page 122, note 1. These lines from Keats's poem "Hyperion" were favorites with Mr. Emerson: —

"One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,
Through which I wandered to eternal truth."

EDUCATION

An invitation to attend and speak words of counsel at the summer festivals attendant upon the graduating exercises of colleges throughout the country always had great attraction for Mr. Emerson. To Carlyle, always praising his friend's words, and as constantly recommending silence and inveighing against speech, Mr. Emerson wrote in 1841: "As usual at this season of the year I, incorrigible spouting Yankee, am writing an oration to deliver to the boys in one of our little country colleges nine days hence. You will say I do not deserve the aid of any Muse. O but if you knew how natural it is to me to run to these places! Besides, I am always lured on by the hope of saying something which shall stick by the good boys."

Of course the privilege of the scholar and his corresponding duties, the objects of study and thought, and advice on the choice, use and limitations of books, were the subjects treated. The essays in this volume on the Scholar and the Man of Letters were college addresses, and the present essay was made up from material used in several given on such occasions, especially those at Waterville College in Maine, and at Dart-

mouth College at Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1863, and at Middlebury, Vermont, in 1864.

It should be remembered that Mr. Emerson had experiences as a teacher in both city and country schools for four years, in which pursuit he had little satisfaction, because, being shy and young, he did not follow his instincts and break loose as much as he would have liked to do from routine methods. In his village life he served for many years on the School Committee, but with great modesty, and in his later life he served on the Board of Overseers of Harvard College, admiring rather the administrative ability of others than taking an active part. He was also on visiting committees. Of his service on these Mr. Cabot says: "He was chairman, from time to time, of committees, of whose reports I find fragmentary drafts among his papers, mostly of a general character; insisting that the aim of the college being to make scholars, the degrees, honors and stipends should be awarded for scholarship, and not for deportment; and that scholarship is to be created, not by compulsion, but by awakening a pure interest in knowledge. 'The wise instructor accomplishes this by opening to his pupils precisely the attractions the study has for himself. He is there to show them what delights and instructs himself in Homer, or Horace, or Dante, and not to weigh the young man's rendering, whether it entitles to four or five or six marks. The marking is a system for schools, not for the college; for boys, not for men; and it is an ungracious work to put on a professor.'"

Page 126, note 1. In his lecture "Boston," Mr. Emerson says, "I trace to this deep religious sentiment and to its culture great and salutary results to the people of New England; first, namely, the culture of the intellect, which has always been found in the Calvinistic church." He then

quotes with pride the order of the General Court of Massachusetts in 1637, with regard to the establishment of schools in all towns "after the Lord has increased them to more than fifty householders," beginning, "to the end that learning may not be buried in the graves of the forefathers, ordered," etc.

Page 127, note 1. Some paragraphs in this portion of the Essay come from lectures on Home, and probably from "School," in the course on Human Life given in Boston in 1838–39.

Page 128, note 1. The passage on the blessings of the home life among the comparatively poor, in the essay on Domestic Life (*Society and Solitude*, pp. 119–121), shows Poverty as a teacher. The following passage is from the lecture on Home given in 1839: —

"The instinct of the mind, its sense of stability, demands some outward type, a *home*, and as fast as one and another are seen to be impermanent, transfers its regard. To the infant, the mother, the bed, the house and furniture supply the object. Presently these pass away; the boy finds that he and they can part and he remain whole. The old ties fade and are succeeded by new, which prove equally fleeting. He is not yet a man if he have not learned the household laws, the precepts of economy and how to reconcile them with the promptings of love, of humanity. A wise man can better afford to spare all the marts and temples and galleries and statehouses and libraries than this key that deciphers them all."

Page 130, note 1.

For the Muse gave special charge
His learning should be deep and large,
And his training should not scant
The deepest lore of wealth or want:

His flesh should feel, his eyes should read
Every maxim of dreadful Need;
In its fulness he should taste
Life's honeycomb, but not too fast.

"The Poet," *Poems*, Appendix.

Page 130, note 2. "Kepler and Newton are born with a taste for the manners of Nature, and catch the whole tune from a few bars, usually from one; for they know that the single fact indicates the universal law." — Lecture on Seven Metres of Intellect, 1866.

Page 131, note 1. Compare the chapter on Language, in "Nature," in the first volume.

Page 131, note 2. See in "The Poet" the lines beginning, —

Divine Inviters! I accept
The courtesy ye have shown and kept
From ancient ages for the bard, etc.

Page 132, note 1.

Being's tide
Swells hitherward, and myriads of forms
Live; robed with beauty, painted by the sun,
Their dust, pervaded by the nerves of God,
Throbs with an overmastering energy
Knowing and doing.

"Pan," *Poems*, Appendix.

Page 132, note 2. The value of a day is told in "Works and Days," in *Society and Solitude*.

Page 133, note 1. Mr. Emerson's young friends John and Henry Thoreau, in their private school in Concord, and especially Mr. Alcott in his schools in Connecticut and Boston, had practised some of the methods, then ridiculed, now held in the very highest esteem. Horace Mann had made wonderful

improvements in the Massachusetts public schools, but in very practical ways. George Barrell Emerson,[1] a distant cousin and highly valued friend of Mr. Emerson, had done much towards raising the quality of public instruction and had kept a school for young ladies in Boston, noted for its excellence.

Page 134, note 1. The compensatory swing of the pendulum of public opinion towards athletics and manual training for boys and girls has surely come.

Page 135, note 1. In his address to the Adelphic Union at Williams College, in 1854, Mr. Emerson said: —

"Trade is not to know friends, or wife, or child, or country. But this walking-ledger knows that though he, poor fellow, has put off his royal robes, somewhere the noble humanity survives, and this consoles him for the brevity and meanness of his street-life. He has not been able to hide from himself that this devotion to means is an absurdity; is, for a livelihood, to defeat the ends of living. . . . He has said, Let there be schools, a clergy, art, music, poetry, the college. But if the youth, looking over the college wall at the houses and the lives of the founders, make the mistake of imitating them, they may well say, 'We paid you that you might not be a merchant. We bought and sold that you might not buy and sell, but reveal the reason of trade. We did not want apes of us, but guides and commanders.'"

Page 138, note 1. "We rightly speak of the guardian angels of children. How superior in their security from infusions of evil persons, from vulgarity and second thought! They shed their own abundant beauty on the objects they behold. Therefore they are not at the mercy of such poor educators as we adults. If we huff and chide them, they

[1] Author of the *Trees and Shrubs of Massachusetts* and of *Recollections of an Old Teacher*.

soon come not to mind it and get a self-reliance; and if we indulge them to folly, they learn the limitation elsewhere." — "Uses of Great Men," *Representative Men*.

Page 138, note 2. In some notes written by Mr. Emerson in 1846, for a little speech at the reunion of his class, twenty-five years after graduating, after telling of all the various works they have in those years been called upon to do, he adds: "But, if we have done these things well, as I doubt not, it was because we could carry ourselves good-humouredly as boys."

Page 142, note 1. Compare, in the "Fragments on the Poet," in the Appendix to the *Poems*, the lines beginning, —

> For thought, and not praise;
> Thought is the wages
> For which I sell days, etc.

Page 143, note 1. Mr. Emerson had been greatly pleased with Thomas Hughes's books, and also with the life of Hodson, his schoolmate at Rugby, *Twelve Years of a Soldier's Life in India*, to which he wrote the introduction. During one of Mr. Emerson's winter lecturing-trips, perhaps in 1860, he was invited to visit a school and say something to the children. In his speech he advised them to read some books that he thought well of, among them *Tom Brown*. Next day he was denounced in the local paper for spreading incendiary abolitionist doctrines in the schools and holding up the traitor John Brown as an exemplar.

Page 144, note 1. His practice was exactly in accordance with his word. With all his sweetness and serenity and the respect with which he treated his own and others' children, he had the quality of inspiring awe at any moment, and resistance to him by word or act was impossible.

Page 146, note 1. Sir Charles Fellow's discovery of Xanthus, the capital of old Lycia, was in 1838. He took Mr. Emerson to the British Museum to show him the results of his ten years' labor. The finest part were the statues in honor of the twelve cities which sent aid to Harpagus, the general who reduced the Ionian cities.

Page 147, note 1. Mr. Emerson elsewhere tells that Dr. Johnson is reported to have said: "If the child says he looked out of this window, when he looked out of that — whip him!"

Page 153, note 1. In spite of Mr. Emerson's humble opinion of his success in his schools, he was remembered with respect and regard by his pupils. Mr. Benjamin Peter Hunt, of Philadelphia, was his pupil in the school at Chelmsford, a boy of whom Mr. Emerson said later, "He was a philosopher whose conversation made all the social comfort I had." Mr. Hunt wrote to him in 1860: —

"It is now thirty-five years since you began your teachings to me, and, with the exception of the great rough impartial world, I think they are the best which I ever received from any man I have personally known. I hope I shall continue to receive similar teachings thankfully, as at present, for many years to come."

In 1865 the ladies whom he had taught as girls in Boston invited him to meet them, and among his words to them on that occasion were the following: —

"I still recall my terrors at entering the school; my timidities at French, the infirmities of my cheek, and my occasional admiration of some of my pupils, — *absit invidia verbo*, — and the vexation of spirit when the will of the pupils was a little too strong for the will of the teacher. . . . I am afraid none but I remembers the merit of the 'compositions' which I care-

fully read, and with the wish to fix their comparative rank. . . . Now I have two regrets in regard to the school. The first is that my teaching was partial and external. I was at the very time already writing every night, in my chamber, my first thoughts on morals and the beautiful laws of compensation and of individual genius, which to observe and illustrate have given sweetness to many years of my life. I am afraid no hint of this ever came into the school, where we clung to the safe and cold details of languages, geography, arithmetic and chemistry. Now I believe that each should serve the other by his or her strength, not by their weakness; and that, if I could have had one hour of deep thought at that time, I could have engaged you in thoughts that would have given reality and depth and joy to the school, and raised all the details to the highest pleasure and nobleness. Then I should have shown you (as I did afterwards to later friends) the poems and works of imagination I delighted in; the single passages which have made some men immortal. The sharing a joy of this kind makes teaching a liberal and delicious art. What I wonder at is that I did not read to you, and attempt to teach you to read, certain selections of Shakspeare and the poets, in which in late years I have had a certain degree of success." Yet the "fair-haired daughters of this raw city" against whom he had "lifted the truncheon," as he wrote forty-two years earlier, brought no complaint against him.

Page 158, note 1. Mr. Emerson often spoke of the good he had received then and later from works of poetry or imagination smuggled under the bench in school and college.

All through college, he was diligently working along the lines that his genius pointed out, to the neglect, however, of the required mathematics, a hopeless task always to him. His rank was about halfway down his class list, but he won prizes for speaking and composition.

He used to express to his friends his pleasure that "children nowadays are encouraged to do things and taught to do them," as contrasted with the times when childish virtue was summed up in the familiar lines of negative virtue, —

> "Speak when you 're spoken to,
> Do what you 're bid,
> Shut the doors after you,
> And you 'll never be chid."

THE SUPERLATIVE

In November, 1847, shortly after his arrival in England, Mr. Emerson gave a lecture on the Superlative, in his course of four before the Manchester Athenæum. Mr. Ireland says that it was also read in London. It underwent modification and received additions later. As it stands now, it was printed in the *Century Magazine* in February, 1882.

In connection with this essay, it is pleasant to give this tribute to Mr. Emerson's power of winning his way with hearers, taken from a newspaper article in the year 1879, apropos of his reading "The Superlative" at that time to the students at Amherst College: —

"In truth there was something wonderful in the way his unaggressive mind has melted away all opposition. It was my privilege to hear him read . . . 'The Superlative, or Mental Temperance,' to an audience certainly as orthodox as can be had in Massachusetts. Years ago, when Mr. Emerson was announced to lecture in that place, only one room in the town was at his disposal, and a union prayer-meeting was appointed in the same building and at the same hour as the lecture, in

order to keep the people away. At his last visit he occupied the platform of the College Hall, and President Julius H. Seelye introduced him, using very aptly and tenderly Emerson's own words, 'The hand that rounded Peter's dome,'" etc.

Page 167, note 1. This was Jonathan Phillips, an esteemed Bostonian whose words Mr. Emerson on several occasions noted in the journals.

Page 168, note 1. The following is from one of the notebooks: —

"The excellence of what I call the *Low Superlative* is shown in Newton's praise of Cotes, 'If he had lived, we should have known something,' or in the *mot* which I found in D'Herbelot, 'If the poems of Dhoair Fariabi fall into thy hands, steal them, though it were in the temple of Mecca;' or in Tom Appleton's speech about Shakspeare, 'He 'll do.'

"'The whistling of cannon-balls affected him so unpleasantly that he withdrew' from the army. — Herr Von P. in *Life of Carl Loewe*, Dwight."

Page 169, note 1. The portion of the lecture about the temperance of the Greek mind is omitted from the essay. I give the following: —

"To Beauty the positive degree is essential. Accuracy is essential to beauty; and the old Latin verse declares that 'the Graces are slow to unbind their zone.' Temperance seems the genius of the Greeks, who were the nation of beauty, — Temperance in rhetoric, painting, sculpture and architecture.

"Temperance too in our partial sense; for Simonides said: 'Bacchus rejoices in being mixed, himself the fourth, with three nymphs;' i. e., wine with three parts water.

"Observe the studied moderation of their phrases. In Athens the Pelasgicon was a strip of land under the western wall of the citadel. A curse had been pronounced on any who should tenant it, and the oracle declared it, 'Better untrodden.' Especially users of the positive degree were the Spartans, who wrote to be read, and spoke to be understood; whose laws were not written. The first Greek Olympiad is the boundary of fable and credible history. Nothing is more remarkable than the severe simplicity of their building, held aloft by just enough support, and all superfluity removed; translating the prose of a wall into the poetry of a colonnade.

"They called Intellect the science of metes and bounds. Greek architecture is geometry. Its temples are diagrams in marble, and not appeals to the imagination, like the Gothic — they are powers of the square and cube. They are productions of the same mind that led Thales to show the Egyptians how to measure the height of their pyramid, by sticking his staff into the ground at the extremity of the shadow of the pyramid and computing it by the Rule of Three, or the famous 47th proposition by Pythagoras, —

"'When the famed lines Pythagoras devised
For which a hecatomb he sacrificed,' —

and the beautiful command of the Delphian Apollo to the Athenians, that they should double his altar, which was a cube (and the doubling the cube being a test of mathematical skill)."

Page 171, note 1. *Hamlet*, Act IV., Scene 4.

Page 172, note 1. Antonio Magliabecchi (1633–1714), the son of a Florentine goldsmith, was a remarkable collector of books, and scholar, and became librarian to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, to whom he left his great library, which the Duke gave to the city.

Giovanni Pico, son of the prince of Mirandola (1463–94), a very remarkable and brilliant scholar. He was versed in Hebrew, Arabic and Chaldee, and devoted himself to sacred letters. He came under the influence of Savonarola, and in the later years of his short life showed great piety and beauty of character.

Page 175, note 1. This was a saying of Linnæus, the great botanist.

Page 175, note 2. In one of the manuscript sheets this sentence ends thus: "The most powerful means are the cheapest; fire, water, fresh air, bodily activity, the stroke of the hand, a kind eye, a serene face, — these are the drugs of Æsculapius and Galen, and these leave the apothecary's shop to inferior and busier doctors. *Peu de moyens, beaucoup d'effet.*"

Page 176, note 1. Two scraps from the lecture might here be given: "The legs of a throne are the plough, the oar, the anvil and the sewing-machine." "I am sorry to find that among the Norse deities was the god *Brage*, celebrated for his eloquence and majestic mien."

Page 176, note 2. See in "Aristocracy," "The terrible aristocracy that is in Nature. Real people dwelling with the real face to face undaunted," etc.

Page 176, note 3. The following is from the lecture-sheets on the subject of the Superlative: —

"In India, it is colossal, and though occasionally confounding us from our want of all key to the apologue, often beautiful. The picture which the Mahabarat gives of the wars of the Suras and Asuras, of the churning the Ocean with the Meron mountain to obtain the drops of the Amreeta, or liquor of immortality, is in the gigantic taste, but is pleasing, and the terrible earnestness of the belief in Fate lends an energy to the

picture of all conflicts, such as those of the enemies of Hari. What can be more tender than the assertion that 'the flame of the funeral pile is cool to the widow,' what more daring than the picture the Brahmins give of the beatitude of contemplative absorption when they declare, that 'Heavenly fruition is an impediment to felicity'?

"In the infancy of society, in barbarous nations, it is as pleasing as berries and game: in the *Arabian Nights*, we have the living Superlative; the fragments of Persian border poetry are gay, light and exhilarating.

"Better yet when we come full on (that desirable person) Hafiz, the model of lyric grace and felicity, the Æolian harp hung in grapevines and harem windows, — Hafiz, the foam of the cup, the sheen of the waterfall, — all whose poetry is a superlative, yet in whom it is native."

Page 177, note 1. "It was quite coincident with this habit of thought, the alternative which the Arabians carried with them in their triumphant march, the Koran or the Sword. With the like extreme, the Prophet encouraged his followers: 'By the God of Abu Taleb's son I swear that a thousand beheadings were easier than one death-bed.' 'The saint's best blush in Heaven is his heart's blood red.'"

Page 178, note 1. In the essay on Plato (*Representative Men*, pp. 52–54) the Oriental and Occidental habits of mind are contrasted, the East loving infinity, the West delighting in boundaries.

Page 179, note 1. This passage followed in the lecture: —

"Perhaps this dominion of the positive degree is to proceed much farther; that our life has at present far too much inflation. European history is the age of wine, age of miscellany, of appetite, of ponderous expense. I call it the age of wine. The age of water, the simpler and sublimer condition, when

the wine is gone inward, or the constitution has powers of original chemistry and can draw the wine of wine from water, as the earth out of loam and silex educes the orange, the pomegranate, plum, peach, pineapple and grape, the *Rus Ruris*, the age of gardens, the age of Temperance, of bread-eaters and water-drinkers; of simple and sincere speech and dealing; the age of the users of the positive degree; — is yet in its coming."

Here is a fragment that did duty probably in "The Superlative," though parts of it are now elsewhere printed: —

"The rule of positive and superlative is this. As long as you deal with things from your common sense, or as other people in the street, call things by their right names. But every man may be (as some men are) raised to a platform whence he sees beyond sense to moral and spiritual truth; when he no longer sees snow as snow, or horses as horses, but only sees or names them representatively, for those interior facts which they signify. This is the way prophets, this is the way poets use them. And in that exaltation small and great are as one, the mind strings worlds like beads upon its thought. The success with which this is done can alone determine how genuine is the inspiration."

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ETHICS

"Some minds are incapable of skepticism. . . . They may well give themselves leave to speculate, for they are sure of a return. Once admitted to the heaven of thought, they see no relapse into night but infinite invitation on the other side. Heaven is within heaven, and sky over sky, and they are encompassed with divinities." Thus wrote Mr. Emerson in his chapter on Montaigne, in *Representative Men*. In every new

discovery which he eagerly heard from his friends, scholars or workers in science, he saw the Law working surely and beautifully. In his first book on Nature he said that she echoes the Ten Commandments. His later essays testify the same, and he said: "For other things, I make poetry of them, but the moral sentiment makes poetry of me."

Hence it was a theme to which he constantly recurred. The material for this essay, which was printed in the *North American Review* of May, 1878, was drawn from several lectures, especially "Morals," given at Freeman Place Chapel, in 1859, "The Essential Principles of Religion," before Theodore Parker's Society at the Music Hall in 1862, "The Rule of Life" and "Natural Religion" at Horticultural Hall respectively in 1867 and 1869, and possibly from others. Mr. Cabot made the best mosaic that he could, and it received Mr. Emerson's approval, but, as he said in his prefatory note to *Letters and Social Aims*, with regard to "Immortality," it contains passages written at periods far apart from one another.

Page 183, note 1. The charm which Oersted's discovery of Polarity had for Mr. Emerson appears in all his writings: —

> The journeying atoms,
> Primordial wholes,
> Firmly draw, firmly drive
> By their animate poles.
>
> "The Sphinx."

The lecture on the Essential Principles of Religion has a similar beginning: —

"The great physicists have signified their belief that our analysis will reach at last a sublime simplicity, and find two elements, or one element with two polarities, at the base of

things; and in morals we are struck with the steady return of a few principles: we are always finding new applications of the maxims and proverbs of the nursery."

Page 185, note 1. There is a little fable, in Scottish dress, on the grub and butterfly, in the Appendix to the *Poems*, beginning, —

Have ye seen the caterpillar
Foully warking in his nest?

Page 185, note 2. This suggests Thoreau's remarks, — that there is no greater blunderer than the man who consumes the best part of his life *getting a living*, and that *you must get your living by loving*.

Page 185, note 3. From Keats's *Hyperion*.

Page 186, note 1. Quoted from Goethe.

Page 190, note 1. This, in the journal, is quoted from Pellet's account of Napoleon's speeches in council.

Page 191, note 1. This paragraph in its first part recalls those in the essay on Fate (*Conduct of Life*, pp. 48, 49), and in its ending suggests the image in "The World-Soul": —

The patient Dæmon sits,
With roses and a shroud;
He has his way, and deals his gifts, —
But ours is not allowed.

Page 193, note 1. In "Voluntaries," as first published at the end of the fourth stanza, were lines omitted in the later version, telling how

The erring foe,
Self-assured that he prevails,
Looks from his victim lying low,
And sees aloft the red right arm
Redress the eternal scales.

Page 194, note 1. The following is from a sheet that perhaps was in the lecture "Worship": —

"But what is it? What is pure spirit? Here we feel that we have no language, that words are only auxiliary and not adequate: are suggestions, and not copies of our cogitation. We worship it; we beseech it to inhabit us, not with words, but, as one said, 'with groanings that cannot be uttered.' We call it not a person. That would cripple and profane our thought. We deny to it personality because that is too little, not too much. It is within all persons. It is the Reason of Reason, the Love of Love, the Life of Life."

"When we have broken our god of tradition and ceased from our god of rhetoric, then may God fire the heart with his presence." — "The Over-Soul."

Page 195, note 1. From the diary of Miss Mary Moody Emerson. This sentence is poetically rendered in "The Nun's Aspiration," the poem which is used for the motto to the sketch of her life in this volume.

Page 195, note 2.

> If the Law should thee forget,
> More enamoured, serve it yet.
>
> "The Poet," *Poems*, Appendix.

Page 196, note 1. This passage about floating with the stream of power and wisdom, and that which follows it about the abdication of choice, are very like those in "Spiritual Laws," *Essays, First Series*, pp. 138, 139.

Page 200, note 1. In his Address to the Divinity Students, speaking of Jesus, Mr. Emerson said: "He spoke of miracles; for he felt that man's life was a miracle, and all that man doth, and he knew that this daily miracle shines as the character ascends. But the word Miracle, as pronounced by

Christian churches, gives a false impression; it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain."

In the verses on the Poet, he is spoken of as

> Born and nourished in miracles.

Page 201, note 1. Ygdrasil in the Norse mythology.

Page 203, note 1. "'Mere morality'— which is much as if one should say, 'Poor God, with nobody to help him.'" See "Worship," *Conduct of Life*, p. 215.

Page 204, note 1. Contrasting the decorously negative position of Boston Unitarianism with the rude and searching, yet human, eloquence of Father Taylor the Methodist, and the fervid Calvinism of his Aunt Mary, Mr. Emerson once used the expression "the corpse-cold Unitarianism of Brattle Street." In his journal of 1837, he said: "When the conversation soars to principles, Unitarianism is boyish."

Page 206, note 1. This expression of a certain sympathy with a religious attitude which he could no longer hold recalls the opening and closing lines of "The Problem."

Page 213, note 1. Compare in the *Poems* the lines in the second "Woodnotes," —

> Him Nature giveth for defence
> His formidable innocence, —

and those in one of the "Fragments on the Poet," —

> But over all his crowning grace,
> Wherefor thanks God his daily praise,
> Is the purging of his eye
> To see the people of the sky:
> From blue mount and headland dim
> Friendly hands stretch forth to him, etc.

Page 213, note 2. Ormuzd and Ahriman, in the Dualism of the Persian religious philosophy, represented the principles of Good and Evil; Mr. Emerson's poem "Uriel" describes, in celestial imagery, the shock that the heresy of the possibility of Good coming out of Evil produces in the minds of some churchmen.

THE PREACHER

In May, 1867, Mr. Emerson read a discourse called "The Rule of Life" before the Radical Association in Boston. It contained matter which was later used in "Sovereignty of Ethics" and in a lecture called "The Preacher" which he gave at the house of Rev. J. T. Sargent in Boston, in the following September. In May, 1879, he read at Divinity Hall Chapel, in Cambridge, a lecture called "The Preacher," which, beside what had been read at Mr. Sargent's, contained some passages from the lectures "Cause and Effect," given in 1861, and "Health," in 1862, both in Boston. "The Preacher" was first published in *The Unitarian Review* for January, 1880.

Mr. Emerson recognized fully the difficulties that beset the Preacher — the same which took him out of the pulpit for the greater freedom of the lecturer's desk — but he made it easier for the next generation. He did as he counselled others: "Be an opener of doors to those who come after you, and don't try to make the Universe a blind alley."

"In Religion the sentiment is all, the ritual or ceremony indifferent."

In the journal of 1838 he wrote: "A sermon, my own,

I read never with joy, though sincerely written; an oration, a poem, another's or my own, I read with joy. Is it that from the first species of writing we cannot banish tradition, convention, and the last is more easily genuine? Or is it that the last being dedicated to Beauty, and the first to Goodness, to Duty, — the spirit flies with hilarity and delight to the last; with domestic obligation and observance only to the first? Or is it that the sentiment of Duty and the Divinity shun demonstration and do retreat into silence; they would pervade all, but they will not be unfolded, exhibited apart, and as matter of science?"

Page 222, note 1. In writing of Gibbon, Mr. Emerson lamented that, with his extraordinary gifts and accomplishment, "the man had no shrine,"— a man's most important possession, he held.

Page 223, note 1. This passage was written in 1837.

Page 223, note 2. Mr. Emerson used to tell that some eminent Frenchman, when asked what his religion was, answered, "Oh, I am of the religion of all sensible men." "And what is that?" said his questioner. "Sensible men never tell," was the answer.

Page 226, note 1. Wordsworth's sonnet "Steamboats, Viaducts and Railways."

Page 227, note 1. In one of the lectures this paragraph was followed by —

"The old psalms and gospels are mighty, as ever showing that what people call religion is literature; that is to say, that here was one who knew how to put his statement, and it stands forever, and people feel its truth, and say, *Thus saith the Lord;* whilst it is only that he had the true literary genius which they fancy they despise. . . .

"*Bibles.* A bible is a collection of formulas to express the inevitable moral facts. It is the record of the experience and aspiration of the wisest and most religious minds, — of the saints of each nation. Of course it will not be ended until the Creation is. Each nation has its own, and of course it is dear to every tender soul, and preferred to every foreign bible, because it is identified with the aspirations and affections of the people and gathers with time a miraculous repute. But with advance of civilization liberal minds discover there are as good or better bibles in other nations, that affirm in other languages the selfsame aspirations, and they gradually enrich their national bible with the best texts from these.

"What happens to nations, happens in each nation earlier to sects. Sects are stoves of a hundred different patterns; but fire keeps its old properties indifferently in them all.

"I think the weapons we oftenest use are artificial, and that our strongest weapons are natural. Thus our talent and our worldly breeding or manners are the arms on which we rely. 'T is a kind of war-paint with which we hope to impress each other and which everybody must put on. And the established religion of our age and country, which by that very fact admits that it is not an enthusiasm, not an intuition, but a doctrine or tradition, of course is a part of this armor; and men are clothed and shod and gloved with these customs, these externalities, and slide along on these arts from year to year, accepting all they find, originating nothing, until at last they depart out of life without using their original force."

Page 229, note 1. "The difference between religion and ethics. There is but one divine element feeding, vivifying all minds. Men, in the moment of its inspirations, are sensible of this unity. But in the off-hours, in this kingdom of custom in which they live, they distinguish between religion and ethics,

as if ethics meant my own perception of right and wrong, — but religion always some other man's. My belief in eternal justice and the rule of right is ethics or morals; but Jesus' or Moses' belief is religion."

Among the stray sheets is this on Religion, which may here be inserted: —

"In children the instinct is specially strong. That lawyer, *Talent*, requires age, experience, ingenuity; but children rest in this native oracle which makes them so much wiser than their sires, who have lost it. What eye-waters all the virtues are! humility, love, courage, and what a blind-man's-buff is conceit!"

Page 230, note 1. Ποῦ στῶ — "Somewhere to stand," a condition which Archimedes required of King Hiero before undertaking to move the world with his mechanical contrivances.

Page 232, note 1. "All of us can understand justice, but few have a taste for theology. Theology is the rhetoric or the technical distribution of conscience." — Lecture-sheets.

Page 233, note 1. This passage, omitted in the essay, was in the lecture: —

"Meditate; let the thought have free course; and delight yourself in each new result and intimation. . . . But the strict condition of success is, — not to build too much on what is already built. Let that alone, and it will let you alone. All your inspirations will come only for what is native to you. You have been struck, in your casual intercourse with obscure people, by some trait of charity, or self-command, of persistency, which was new as the last sunbeam, not taught him or her who showed it, not quoted, not imitated. You dwell upon it, magnify it, as if there were nothing else: as if it contained all virtue. Well, you are right: domesticate that; bear down

upon it; it will bear up thee, me and all nature, as easily as a scrap of down. For all the virtues are sisters, and that which comes to you in this native way is representative of all, — is the door which God opens for you to all the heaven.

"Couture's rules of drawing are swiftly translatable into rules of writing. 'Draw directly or actually a perpendicular and a horizontal line through the centre of the object.' Now suppose the theme was Cambridge, or Andover; *actually* to draw the lines would be to name them: *ideally*, to hint them by suggestive description. The perpendicular line would be their relation to truth; the horizontal, their relation to the world around them. Couture proceeds, — 'Half close the eyes and look at the object long: find where is the strongest light, and the degrees of light, and thus see only the masses, without the details. Then do the like to see where is the strongest shadow, and the less strong. Draw these with vigor. Keep three quarters of your eye on Nature, and only one quarter on your work.'[1] Now apply these rules to your writing. 'Half close the eyes and look at the object long and find the strongest light.' That is — Don't think of your chamber, or boarding-house, or the daily routine of life or instruction, but search your memory for the happiest passages, the best thought, the best intercourse, some crowning result that has characterized the curriculum or the society, the height of hope, the fruitfullest truth — then you have the strongest light, and minor lights, and will see masses and not details."

Page 235, note 1. He here mentions a main secret of his own success.

Page 235, note 2. Here followed in the lecture this sentence: —

[1] These are quoted from *Methode et Entretien d'Atelier*, by Thomas Couture.

"And I should think it praise enough of the friends I speak to, if they now again, as the Quakers of old, brought back their age to see the simplicity of Divine Action, that Heaven does not come with libraries in his hand, but repeats the whole commandment to each mind."

Page 236, note 1. The following sentence here came in: —

"But let passing events suggest the theme which we will carry out of its trivial limits by lifting it to the measure of duty and of our destiny."

Page 237, note 1. This is a part of the counsel given to Osiris by his father, as told in *A Treatise on Providence* by Synesius. It is included in the same volume with Thomas Taylor's translation of Plotinus.

Page 238, note 1. Mr. Emerson's exhortation to the young divines, in his Address in 1838, may fitly end the notes on "The Preacher." "Yourself a new-born bard of the Holy Ghost, cast behind you all conformity and acquaint men at first hand with Deity. Look to it first and only, that fashion, custom, authority, pleasure and money are nothing to you, — are not bandages over your eyes, that you cannot see, — but live with the privilege of the immeasurable mind. Not too anxious to visit periodically all families and each family in your parish connection, — when you meet one of these men or women, be to them a divine man; be to them thought and virtue; let their timid aspirations find in you a friend; let their trampled instincts be genially tempted out in your atmosphere; let their doubts know that you have doubted, and their wonder feel that you have wondered. By trusting your own heart, you shall gain more confidence in other men. For all our penny-wisdom, for all our soul-destroying slavery to habit, it is not to be doubted that all men have sublime thoughts; that

all men value the few real hours of life. . . . Discharge to men the priestly office, and, present or absent, you shall be followed with their love as by an angel."

THE MAN OF LETTERS

On July 22, 1863, Mr. Emerson, by the invitation of the literary societies of Dartmouth College, read an address on a theme always dear and fresh to him, the happiness and privilege of the Scholar, who, he said there, "has drawn the white lot in life." On August 11, he repeated the address at Waterville College in Maine.

The essay here published is that address, with a new title to distinguish it from the next, which is of the same character. Its length shows that it is only a portion of the address as delivered, having been plundered of its sheets for the benefit of other essays. Probably "The Scholar" contains some of them.

Page 242, note 1. In his Williams College address in 1854, speaking of the "practical" man of trade, "the walking ledger," Mr. Emerson said: —

"He knows the conditions of vulgar success, — that a devotion to means without reference to any end is the sole safe method. But he has not been able to hide from himself that this is an absurdity, — he is prescribing amputation for headache, — is, for a livelihood, to defeat the ends of living; and it is out of the wish to preserve sanity in time to come; to find out how the minor propositions may be established without throwing overboard the major proposition; . . . that he has said, 'Let there be schools, a clergy, art, music and poetry.'"

Page 244, note 1.

Earth smiled with flowers, and man was born.

. . . . . .

On the wind-blown sea-marge bleak,
Forward stepped the perfect Greek.

"Solution," *Poems.*

Page 244, note 2. Of the Puritan fathers Mr. Emerson says, in his lecture "Boston," *Natural History of Intellect*, "They were precisely the idealists of England; the most religious in a religious era. An old lady who remembered these pious people said of them that 'they had to hold on hard to the huckleberry bushes to hinder themselves from being translated.'"

Page 245, note 1. Compare what is said of *Faust* in the chapter on Goethe, in *Representative Men.*

Page 245, note 2. "Life should not be prosaic. The reason why it is, is because it is false and violates the laws of the mind. Life tends ever to be picturesque, and, on the entrance of a genial and superior friend, becomes so." — Stray sheet on Beauty.

Page 247, note 1. Journal, 1856. "What 's the use of this prostitution of literature? Art lies not in trying to make an obscure thing prominent, but in choosing what is really eminent, and showing its eminence. You can't write up what gravitates down."

Page 248, note 1. Journal, 1832. "'I teach by degrees,' says Landor's Epicurus. 'It is not the will, but the necessity of the wise. None are wise enow to teach otherwise. All this pedantry about the people's not bearing the whole truth, — what else does it mean, than that the teacher has not yet arrived at the safe, that is, the *true* statement of the particular doctrine which he would oppose to the ruling

error.' He knows in general there is an error; he has not yet found its boundary lines."

Page 249, note 1. From Wordsworth's "Laodamia."

Page 250, note 1. Compare in the "Boston Hymn" the lines beginning —

Lo! I uncover the land.

Page 251, note 1. In the year 1863 Mr. Emerson was appointed a member of the committee to visit and report on the United States Military Academy at West Point. He was greatly pleased with all he saw there, especially the manly and honorable tone of the cadets, and the simple life and self-help required by the discipline of the Academy.

Page 252, note 1. Journal, 1837. "I thought, as I rode through the sloughs yesterday, that nothing is more untrue, as well as unfavorable to power, than that the thinker should open his mind to fear of the people among whom he works. Rather let him exult in his force. Whichever way he turns, he sees the pleasure and deference which these faculties of writing and speaking excite."

Page 254, note 1. In the decadence of public morality during the period between the Mexican and Civil wars, Mr. Emerson's note-books had many entries tracing the lapses in literature, art, the learned professions, especially among the clergy, and in citizenship and statesmanship all to one root — skepticism, abandonment of the ideal.

Page 256, note 1. "The man of genius is he who has received a larger portion of the common nature. He apprises us not so much of his wealth as of the common wealth. Are his thoughts profound? So much the less are they his, so much the more the property of all." — Lecture on Society, course of 1836–37.

Page 257, note 1. "To stand for the private verdict against popular clamor is the office of the noble. If a humane measure is propounded in behalf of the slave, or of the Irishman, or the Catholic, or for the succor of the poor; that sentiment, that project, will have the homage of the hero. That is his nobility, his oath of knighthood, to succor the helpless and oppressed; always to throw himself on the side of weakness, of youth, of hope; on the liberal, on the expansive side, never on the defensive, the conserving, the timorous, the lock-and-bolt system. More than our good will we may not be able to give. We have our own affairs, our own genius, which chains each to his proper work. We cannot give our life to the cause of the debtor, of the slave, or the pauper, as another is doing; but to one thing we are bound, not to blaspheme the sentiment and the work of that man, not to throw stumbling-blocks in the way of the abolitionist, the philanthropist; as the organs of influence and opinion are swift to do." — "The Young American," *Nature, Addresses and Lectures.*

Page 257, note 2. Yet with all his interest, as citizen and patriot, in the political struggles of his day, and the War for Freedom and Union that resulted, he never let the dust of party strife obscure the sidereal heavens, and he feared lest the youth, in the strife over transient issues in their day, lose a true sense of perspective for the great laws. The following is from a sheet which has done duty in lectures like the present: —

"The true question is, how to reach and detain truth, — and the quite secondary question is the position of affairs today. I say, Beware of the last question. Give it no thought; leave it to the journals and the gossips. The only firm ground is, *What truth interests you, attracts you*, how far have you penetrated it. Happy is he whose thought interests him, —

whose book is sweet to him, and makes him forget the time, — forget or despise the cold, the smoke, or whatever inconvenience. Our real benefactors are not those who gave us money or hospitality, but those who brought us acquainted with Plato, with Milton, with Herbert, Antoninus, Taylor, with the great lords of the spiritual world, whether intellectual or ethical; who spoke to the conscience and to the reason, imagination; who made our ears and memories rich with imperishable thoughts."

THE SCHOLAR

At the time when the invitation came to Mr. Emerson from the Senior Class at the University of Virginia to address them on the occasion of their graduation, — the first invitation which had come to him from any Southern college, — he was no longer able to write an oration. But this call from the young men of the South was one of peculiar interest, one which it might seem ungracious to refuse, and all through life he had been writing to and for scholars. By Mr. Cabot's kind and ready help a suitable arrangement was made of sheets on the subject, many of which had, of course, done duty in earlier college addresses.

Page 262, note 1. In the journal of 1851, Mr. Emerson wrote of Beauty: "It is a privilege. . . . Indeed all privilege is that of Beauty, for there are many Beauties: 1, of face; 2, of form; 3, of manner, not less prevailing; 4, of brain or method — the sphere changes with the mode, and the sphere of brain or method is elemental, and lasts long, — Shak-

speare's, Raphael's, Michel Angelo's is the Beauty of Brain or Method."

Page 263, note 1. Mr. Charles J. Woodbury relates that Mr. Emerson, talking with him in his student days of the American historians, commended their mastery of their subjects, but lamented their mechanical quality and lack of style. He said, "They have no lilt in them. You noticed the marble we have just seen. You remember that marble is nothing but *crystallized* limestone? Well, some writers never get out of the limestone condition. Be airy. Let your characters breathe from you. Walk upon the ground, but not to sink. It is a fine power this. Some men have it, prominently the French. How it manifests itself in Montaigne . . . and in Urquhart's Rabelais! Grimm almost alone of the Germans has it; Borrow had it; Thoreau had it; and James Wilson — sometimes." [1]

Page 263, note 2. It is a pleasure to give here Mr. Emerson's words about another scholar of a far different type, yet who has written so well of him — Dr. Holmes: —

"What shall I say of his delight in manners, in society, in elegance, in short, of his delight in *Culture*, which makes him a civilizer whom every man and woman secretly thanks for valuable hints?

"What then of his correction of popular errors in taste, in behaviour, in the uncertain sciences, and in theology, attested by the alarm of the synods, and this is only possible to the man who has the capital merit of healthy perception, who can draw all men to read him; whose thoughts leave such cheerful and perfumed memories, that when the newsboy enters the car, all over the wide wildernesses of America the tired traveller says, 'Here comes the Autocrat to bring me one

[1] *Talks with Ralph Waldo Emerson.* New York: Baker & Taylor, 1890.

half hour's absolute relief from the vacant mind.' " — Notes in Journal for speech at the dinner to Dr. Holmes on his Fiftieth Birthday, August 29, 1859.

Page 264, note 1. This address cannot but recall others on the same theme. The following passage is from the Address "Literary Ethics," given at Dartmouth College in 1838: —

"Neither years nor books have yet availed to extirpate a prejudice then rooted in me, that a scholar is the favorite of Heaven and earth, the excellency of his country, the happiest of men. His duties lead him directly into the holy ground where other men's aspirations only point. His successes are occasions of the purest joy to all men. Eyes is he to the blind; feet is he to the lame. His failures, if he is worthy, are inlets to higher advantages. . . . The public can get public experience, but they wish the scholar to replace to them those private, sincere, divine experiences of which they have been defrauded by dwelling in the street."

And the following sentence from Mr. Emerson's Address to the Divinity Students, in the same month, may be added: —

"What hinders that now, everywhere, in pulpits, in lecture-rooms, in houses, in fields, wherever the invitation of men or your own occasions lead you, you speak the very truth, as your life and conscience teach it, and cheer the waiting, fainting hearts of men with new hope and new revelation?"

Page 266, note 1. For Nature's method of teaching by allurements and surprises, see the two "Nature" poems and the quatrain thus called.

Page 267, note 1. "The poet, in utter solitude remembering his spontaneous thoughts and recording them, is found to have recorded that which men in crowded cities find true for them also. The orator distrusts at first the fitness of his frank

confessions, his want of knowledge of the persons he addresses, until he finds that he is the complement of his hearers; — that they drink his words because he fulfils for them their own nature; the deeper he dives into his privatest, secretest presentiment, to his wonder he finds this is the most acceptable, most public, and universally true. The people delight in it; the better part of every man feels, This is my music; this is myself. In self-trust all the virtues are comprehended. Free should the scholar be, — free and brave." — "The American Scholar," *Nature, Addresses and Lectures.*

Page 268, note 1. Mr. Emerson copied as a motto this line of Ossian: "Cathmore dwelt in the wood to avoid the voice of praise." He wrote in his journal, of his ideal man, "I will add to the portrait of Osman that he had never to look after his fame and his compliments, his claps and his editions."

Page 270, note 1. In the "Fragments on the Poet," stanza IV., is told the far-reaching power of the random word which the listener hears from the Muse, feigning to speak to another.

Page 271, note 1. "Almack's" was a suite of assembly-rooms in King Street, St. James's, London, built in 1765 by MacCaul, the valet of a Scottish nobleman, who reversed his name when he came to London and became a tavern-keeper. From 1765 to 1840 balls were held at Almack's under the management of a committee of ladies of rank. "The circle having admission to balls at Almack's was, at the beginning of the century, regarded as the seventh heaven of the fashionable world." The rooms were not closed until 1890.

Page 274, note 1. Compare what is said of the labor due from the Scholar in the essay on Greatness, *Letters and Social Aims*, p. 311.

Page 277, note 1. Usually in his writings, as in this essay, two pages later, Mr. Emerson warns against talent, meaning thereby self-exhibition, but here the word seems used in the sense of successful expression.

Page 279, note 1. "Men of talent sometimes seem to me sepulchres in which vices are entombed with architecture and praise." — Lecture-sheet.

Page 282, note 1. "The man whose part is taken and who does not wait for society in anything, has a power which society cannot choose but feel. The familiar experiment called the hydrostatic paradox, in which a capillary column of water balances the ocean, is a symbol of the relation of one man to the whole family of men." — "New England Reformers," *Essays, Second Series.*

Page 284, note 1. Journal, 1841. "No man can write anything who does not think that what he writes is for the time the history of the world, or do anything well who does not suppose his work to be of greatest importance. My work may be of none, but I must not think it of none, or I shall not do it with impunity. Whoso does what he thinks mean is mean."

Page 287, note 1. "The scholar will feel that the richest romance, the noblest fiction that was ever woven, the heart and soul of beauty, lies enclosed in human life. Itself of surpassing value, it is also the richest material for his creations. How shall he know its secrets of tenderness, of terror, of will, and of fate? How can he catch and keep the strain of upper music that peals from it? Its laws are concealed under the details of daily action. . . . He must bear his share of the common load. . . . Out of love and hatred, out of earnings, and borrowings, and lendings, and losses; out of sickness and pain; out of wooing and worshipping; out of travelling, and voting, and watching, and caring; out of disgrace and con-

tempt, comes our tuition in the serene and beautiful laws. Let him not slur his lesson; let him learn it by heart. Let him endeavor exactly, bravely, and cheerfully, to solve the problem of that life which is set before *him*. And this by punctual action, and not by promises or dreams."—"Literary Ethics," *Nature, Addresses and Lectures.*

Page 288, note 1.

> The hero is not fed on sweets,
> Daily his own heart he eats;
> Chambers of the great are jails,
> And head-winds right for royal sails.
>
> "Heroism," *Poems.*

Page 288, note 2. Mr. Emerson, in a letter to a friend, said:—

"It happens to us once or twice in a lifetime to be drunk with some book which probably has some extraordinary relative power to intoxicate *us* and none other: and having exhausted that cup of enchantment we go groping in libraries all our years afterward in the hope of being in Paradise again. But what better sign can the genius of our times show that the old creative force is ready to work again, than the universal indisposition of the best heads to touch the books even of name and fame?"

Page 289, note 1. "Strength and spirits are wasted in rejection. But the strong spirits overpower those around them without effort. Their thought and emotion comes in like a flood, quite withdraws them from all notice of these carping critics; they surrender themselves with glad heart to the heavenly guide, and only by implication reject the clamorous nonsense of the hour. Grave seniors talk to the deaf,— church and old book mumble and ritualize to an unheeding, preoccupied and advancing mind, and thus they, by happiness of greater

momentum, lose no time, but take the right road at first." — "The Transcendentalist," *Nature, Addresses and Lectures.*

PLUTARCH

Dr. Holmes said, in his Memoir of Mr. Emerson, that "the Essay on Plutarch has a peculiar value from the fact that Emerson owes more to him than to any other author except Plato, who is one of the only two writers quoted oftener than Plutarch. *Mutato nomine*, the portrait which Emerson draws of the Greek moralist might stand for his own." There is much truth in this remark. Throughout Plutarch's writings the gracious and humane personality is singularly apparent, and the reasons of this sympathy across the centuries are plain.

Mr. Emerson as a boy read Plutarch, and never tired of this early friend. When I was fourteen years old, he put *Plutarch's Lives* into my hand and bade me read two pages every week-day and ten every holiday. It seemed at first an irksome task, but my mother asked me to read them aloud to her, and this made it easier. Lycurgus's training of the Spartan boys, Archimedes's amazing military engineering in the defence of Syracuse, Hannibal's passage of the Alps, Scipio's magnanimity and Cæsar's courage and genius won their own way, as my father knew they would with a boy, and, what is by no means common with authors, the personality of the writer also, as, for instance, where he drops the narrative to hotly censure the meanness of Cato the Elder in selling his slaves when they were past service. The style of Plutarch could commend itself even to a boy. Mr. Emerson loved the racy English of Morgan's edition of the *Morals* of 1718, and while sure of the

accurate scholarship of Professor Goodwin in his revision of the work, I think interceded with him in advance to save the old English phraseology where possible, which was done. The correction of the inaccuracies, often gross, and the clearing up of obscurities by Professor Goodwin gave him, as he says in the essay, great pleasure.

He was sure that Plutarch was as good reading for to-day as for men or boys nineteen centuries ago. He wrote, "When I read Plutarch, or look at a Greek vase, I am inclined to accept the common opinion of the learned, that the Greeks had cleaner wits than any other people. But there is anything but time in my idea of the Antique. A clear and natural expression by word or deed is that which we mean, when we love and praise the Antique. In society, I do not find it; in modern books, seldom; but when I come into the pastures, I find antiquity again. Once in the fields with the lowing cattle, the birds, trees, waters, and satisfying curves of the landscape, and I cannot tell whether this is Thessaly and Enna, or whether Concord and Acton."

Page 295, note 1. Jacques Amyot (1513–1593), a youth of humble parentage, went to the College of France, and there underwent great privations in his zeal for learning. He soon after was made Professor of Greek and Latin at the University of Bourges. He there translated some of Plutarch's *Lives*, which he dedicated to Francis I., who was so much pleased that he gave him the revenues of the Abbey of Bellezane. Amyot's dream was to translate Plutarch, and he went to Italy in the train of certain prelates to see the best texts. Henry II. made him tutor to his two sons, later Charles IX. and Henry III., and for his success and his translations of Plutarch's *Lives* and *Morals* made him grand almoner and

Bishop of Auxerre. This necessitated his temporarily leaving the study of the Pagan writers to learn a little divinity. His royal pupils befriended him, but in the time of the League sad reverses befell him.

Page 295, note 2. Jeanne D'Albret, queen of Navarre, of whom it was said that she was "a princess with nothing of the woman but the sex, with a soul full of everything manly, a mind fit to cope with affairs of moment and a heart invincible in adversity."

Page 297, note 1. La Cité Antique, by Coulanges, is the work here alluded to.

Page 299, note 1. Probably the chapter which Mr. Emerson had to skip because of its technicality was the one "Concerning Music."

Page 302, note 1. This is a favorite doctrine of Mr. Emerson's, appearing in many places, especially in "Quotation and Originality" (*Letters and Social Aims*), that a good quoter acquires some rights in the original. Speaking of Shakspeare's borrowings, in *Representative Men*, he said, "A great poet who appears in illiterate times absorbs into his sphere all the light which is anywhere radiating."

Page 303, note 1. This recalls the paper by Oscar Wilde "On the Decay of Lying," a suggestive article on Art, in spite of the whimsical form in which it is clothed.

Page 306, note 1. Mr. Emerson spoke in "The Over-Soul" of "that flowing river which, out of regions I see not, pours for a season its streams into me." See also the poem, "The Two Rivers."

Page 310, note 1. This passage is one of those in which the likeness spoken of by Dr. Holmes between Plutarch and Emerson is conspicuous, the latter eager for all facts the naturalist could give, but using them as keys to higher laws.

Page 318, note 1. In the journal, Mr. Emerson quotes Clough's choice, — "Plutarch's best life is Antony, I think."

Page 320, note 1. This is characteristic of Mr. Emerson. He willingly gave *to proper persons* letters of introduction, but he almost never used them. He said, "My practice is to go to the inn in the town where the person I wish to see lives and send a note to him thence. He can judge by the note whether I am a person he cares to see, or no."

Page 322, note 1. This phrase pleased Mr. Emerson; he used it, slightly modified, in the first stanza of "The Poet," where the verse

> Fell unregarded to the ground,
> Unseen by such as stood around.
> The pious wind took it away,
> The reverent darkness hid the lay.

Page 322, note 2. Journal, 1860. "Plutarch, the elixir of Greece and Rome, — that is the book which nations want to compose. If the world's library were burning, I should as soon fly to rescue that as Shakspeare and Plato, or next afterwards."

HISTORIC NOTES OF LIFE AND LETTERS IN NEW ENGLAND

It is remembered in the family that this paper was not a mosaic of many notes taken at different times, but that most of it was continuously written, and with enjoyment, by Mr. Emerson, probably about the year 1867, for one or more lectures. His daughter remembers her father's saying, with a smile of amusement, "I believe I must put in Brook Farm."

He was afraid that it might be a little early to do so, and this portion must have been read as a parlor lecture. "Historic Notes" was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* for October, 1883.

Page 327, note 1. The tendencies of that epoch are also described in the essays on the Transcendentalist and on New England Reformers.

Page 328, note 1. Mr. Emerson could not like *Faust*, could never feel that the poet was justified in meddling with "the Negative." He expresses himself further upon the poem in the chapter on Goethe in *Representative Men*, and in the division "Morals" in "Poetry and Imagination," in *Letters and Social Aims*, and in the "Man of Letters" in this volume.

He valued much the work by Professor James Hutchison Stirling, of Edinburgh, *The Secret of Hegel*.

Page 329, note 1. Dr. Jacob Bigelow, eminent both as physician and botanist, had at this time introduced a healthy skepticism among the physicians of Massachusetts as to the power of drugs over disease, much to the advantage of the practice of that day of heroic treatment in which mediæval methods and prescriptions lingered; and soon after, the young Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes became a formidable and useful critic as to the ways and beliefs of the profession; both of these writers clearing the ground for a more rational and scientific practice.

Page 330, note 1. As is shown in his chapter on Swedenborg, in *Representative Men*, Mr. Emerson's value for the high symbolism of the seer did not blind him to his sombre and tedious monotony. In an early poem he laments that a friend should cower before

> The phantoms
> One self-deceiving mystic drew in swarms
> Wherever rolled his visionary eye,
> The Swedish Pluto of a world of ghosts, —
> Eyes without light, men without character,
> Nature a cave of theologians.

Page 333, note 1. Mr. Cabot says in the Memoir that the enthusiasm of admiration felt by the young Emerson for Everett subjected him to the ridicule of his more prosy classmates, and adds: "The admiration had begun earlier, when Everett was preaching in Boston, and Emerson (as he told me) and his brother Edward used to go on Sunday and peep into the church where their favorite was expected to preach, to make sure that he was in the pulpit."

In a letter to his classmate, John B. Hill, he wrote, the year after their graduation: "I have been attending Professor Everett's lectures, which he has begun to deliver in this city, upon Antiquities. I am as much enamoured as ever with the incomparable manner of my old idol, though much of his matter is easily acquired from common books. We think strong sense to be his distinguishing feature; he never commits himself, never makes a mistake."

Page 335, note 1. From this paragraph it appears that very possibly the Lyceum system, which, starting from the Northern seaboard, spread speedily throughout the Middle and Western States, though it seemed unable to pass Mason and Dixon's line, owed much of its initial success to Everett. To the Lyceum the wide spreading of Mr. Emerson's influence was largely due, for all of his essays were originally spoken face to face to the men and women of his country.

Page 335, note 2. Rev. Nathaniel L. Frothingham, pastor

of the First Church in Boston and, earlier, instructor in Rhetoric and Oratory at Harvard College, was friendly to Mr. Emerson and seems to have been one among the older clergy who was not wholly shocked by the Divinity School Address. He was a member of the Transcendental Club in 1836.

Professor Andrews Norton held the chair of Biblical Literature in the Divinity School of Harvard College. Mr. Cabot spoke of him as "a man of acute intellect and a commanding personality, and, I suppose, the foremost theologian of the Liberal Christians."

Page 336, note 1. Of discoveries in astronomy and its great laws Mr. Emerson only knew from his reading, but he was fortunate in having for his brother-in-law Dr. Charles Thomas Jackson, educated in Paris, and an accomplished chemist and geologist in the modern advance of these sciences. He made the first geological surveys of many of the States, and was the first to examine and make scientific report on the great mineral resources of the Lake Superior region. Mr. Emerson frequently enjoyed his brilliant conversation in his laboratory in Boston and during Dr. Jackson's visits to his sister, Mrs. Emerson, in Concord.

Page 340, note 1. With Dr. Channing, who was installed as pastor of the Federal Street Church in Boston the year that Emerson was born, he always had the kindest relations, felt in youth his influence, and later preached in his pulpit by invitation. Rev. John W. Chadwick in his life of Channing [1] says, "We do not wonder at Emerson's delight in Channing when we read this superb anticipation of his own 'Self-Reliance' [Dr. Channing's address on Spiritual Freedom]."

[1] *William Ellery Channing, Minister of Religion.* By John W. Chadwick. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.; 1903.

Mr. Emerson wrote, "In our wantonness we often flout Dr. Channing and say he is getting old. But as soon as he is ill, we remember he is our bishop, and that we have not done with him yet."

Page 341, note 1. Dr. Francis was a Unitarian clergyman of wide sympathies and genial character, brother of the charming and typical New England woman, Mrs. Lydia Maria Child, the authoress and reformer of the best type.

Dr. Frederic H. Hedge, a clergyman first in Bangor, Maine, then in Brookline, Massachusetts, studied in Germany and was a student of German literature, but especially of philosophy.

Rev. Orestes A. Brownson, born the same year with Mr. Emerson, was a marked reformer in his day. Beginning life as a Universalist preacher, he became strongly interested in the schemes for social reform of the Englishman, Robert Owen, and in 1828 organized the Working Men's Party in New York. After coming under Dr. Channing's influence he became a Unitarian clergyman, and soon after formed the Society for Christian Union and Progress, and preached for them for several years. He supported, and for the most part wrote, certain magazines to propagate his beliefs. In 1844 he became a Catholic, and not long after was offered a chair in the University of Dublin by Dr. John Henry Newman, but declined it.

Rev. William Henry Channing, near in kindred to Dr. Channing, was a man high-minded, enthusiastic, and beautiful in character. He was the contemporary and friend of James Freeman Clarke, with whom he was associated in the publication of the *Western Messenger* in Cincinnati, and with him and Mr. Emerson in writing the life of Margaret Fuller. He was, during the Civil War, pastor of a Unitarian church

in Washington, and later lived in England, where he preached to a society in London.

The pure idealist mentioned in the end of the paragraph is, of course, Mr. Alcott.

Page 342, note 1. The following stray sheets from a lecture on this subject are here introduced because of the allusion to Mr. Alcott in the latter part: —

"Every man, in the degree in which he has positive convictions, is continually disappointed in his acquaintance with men. He is searching in the crowd for types of those convictions. Of course he does not find them easily. He goes to England: but where are the extraordinary individuals? He meets a great many trifling persons with foolish sounding voices, but not easily those mighty men, unrivalable by Americans, he looked for among the Milmans, Macaulays, Milnes, Disraelis, Wilsons. Yes. What then of Wordsworth? Landor? Carlyle? Tennyson? Well, these are as exceptional there and admired as here, and perhaps disdainful of the mediocrity of their several circles. And the young traveller is struck even more than at home — (perhaps it is his fault of false expectation and his own unfitness) — at the poverty and limitation.

"Not the less is it true, that each man comes into the world timed and accompanied by just conditions and associates, — no matter how self-sufficing or how *exigeant* he is. 'T is certain that to each of us the loss of a few persons would be most impoverishing, — a few persons who give flesh to what were else mere thoughts and which now he is not at liberty to slight, or in any manner treat as fictions. He cannot treat Platonism as cloud-land, if he knows a Platonist who makes the theory as solid to him as Massachusetts. He cannot hold Stoicism impossible if he has before him a Stoic in flesh and

blood with pertinacious Saxon belief, and Saxon performance. Nor hold Pythagoras to be mythical, if he finds at his door the like urgent organizer of association."

In the passage following the above, Mr. Emerson seems to be speaking of the inability which he always felt to satisfy the hope and desire of friends of warmer temperament: —

"But when one of the Dorians conversed with one of the Persians, it was a great disadvantage to the last. For the native coldness of the Dorian so contrasted with the heat of the other, that it seemed rigor and austerity. 'I ought never to converse with you,' said the Dorian, 'since to love and to hate, to live and to die, seem to me no more than to walk out into the road and return hither, whilst to you they are passionate occasions, and the bare mention of these words excite you to joy and despondency.'"

Page 342, note 2. Journal (about 1840). "The view taken in State Street of Transcendentalism is that it threatens to invalidate contracts."

Page 343, note 1. For further information concerning the Transcendental epoch, see Mr. Cabot's *Memoir of Emerson*, *Transcendentalism in New England*, by the Rev. Octavius B. Frothingham, and in Mr. George W. Cooke's life of Mr. Emerson the chapter "The Era of Transcendentalism."

Page 344, note 1. In the *Familiar Letters of Thoreau*, edited by Mr. F. B. Sanborn, are several interesting references to the *Dial* at a time when Thoreau was helping Mr. Emerson in the editing.

Page 344, note 2. In spite of their difference in temperament and method, Emerson and Parker had great esteem and honor one for another. Mr. Emerson said, "Parker is a soldier whom God gave strength and will to fight for him the battle

of the day." In the volume *Miscellanies* will be found his address at the memorial meeting in the Music Hall after Mr. Parker's death. Mr. Edwin D. Mead has written an interesting chapter on Emerson and Parker.[1] Lowell, in his *Fable for Critics*, gives a spirited and amusing description in verse of Parker's forceful and omniscient preaching.

Page 346, note 1. Journal, 1847. "Here was ——— ———, with somewhat ridiculous, yet much nobility, always combined in his person and conversation truth, honesty, love, independence, — yet this listening to men and this credulity in days and conventions and Brisbane projects. His look has somewhat too priestly and ecclesiastic in its cut. He looks like a Universalist minister. But though his intellect is something low and limitary, prosaic and a good roadster, yet he has great depth of character, and grows on your eye. Pathetic it was to hear of his little circle of six young men who met one evening long ago in a little chamber in Boston, and talked over his project of *No Money* until all saw that it was true, and had new faith in the omnipotence of love. In Alabama and Georgia he seems to have stopped in every printing-house, and the only signs of hope and comfort he found were newspapers like Brisbane's 'Future,' which he found in these dusky universities. When shall we see a man whose image blends with nature, so that when he is gone, he shall not seem a little ridiculous, that same small man!"

Page 347, note 1. Robert Owen, a Welshman, as his name indicates, and with the sanguine zeal of the race, persevered in benevolent socialistic schemes, which came to nothing, all through his life. Among others was that of New Harmony, Indiana, where with his own means he bought 20,000 acres

[1] *The Influence of Emerson*, published by the American Unitarian Association, Boston, 1903.

of land and dwellings for 1000 people. He was a constant writer on his favorite theories, his principal work being *The Book of the New Moral World.*

Page 348, note 1. The five following pages are from a paper entitled "Fourierism and the Socialists," written by Mr. Emerson in the *Dial* for July, 1842, as an introduction to an article by Mr. Albert Brisbane, called "Means of effecting a Final Reconciliation between Religion and Science." The opening paragraph of Mr. Emerson's introduction, omitted from this essay, was as follows: —

"The increasing zeal and numbers of the disciples of Fourier, in America and in Europe, entitle them to an attention which their theory and practical projects will justify and reward. In London, a good weekly newspaper (lately changed into a monthly journal) called the *Phalanx*, devoted to the social doctrines of Charles Fourier, and bearing for its motto, 'Association and Colonization,' is edited by Hugh Doherty. Mr. Etzler's inventions, as described in the *Phalanx*, promise to cultivate twenty thousand acres with the aid of four men only and cheap machinery. Thus the laborers are threatened with starvation, if they do not organize themselves into corporations, so that machinery may labor *for*, instead of working *against* them. It appears that Mr. Young, an Englishman of large property, has purchased the Bénédictine Abbey of Citeaux, in the Mont d'Or, in France, with its ample domains, for the purpose of establishing a colony there. We also learn that some members of the sect have bought an estate at Santa Catharina, fifty miles from Rio Janeiro, in a good situation for an agricultural experiment, and one hundred laborers have sailed from Havre to that port, and nineteen hundred more are to follow. On the anniversary of the birthday of Fourier, which occurred in April, public festivals were kept

by the Socialists in London, in Paris and in New York. In the city of New York, the disciples of Fourier have bought a column in the *Daily Tribune*, Horace Greeley's excellent newspaper, whose daily and weekly circulation exceeds twenty thousand copies, and through that organ are now diffusing their opinions."

Page 354, note 1. Fourier and his doctrines and followers are alluded to by Mr. Emerson in "The Young American," *Nature, Addresses and Lectures*, pp. 382 ff., and in *Representative Men*, in the last paragraph of "Napoleon."

Page 357, note 1. The sturdy, simple monk, Samson, is the hero of Carlyle's *Past and Present*.

Page 360, note 1. Mr. Emerson wrote at the beginning of the Brook Farm experiment in 1840: —

"What a brave thing Mr. Ripley has done! He stands now at the head of the Church Militant, and his step cannot be without an important sequel. For the 'community,' I have given it some earnest attention and much talk, and have not quite decided not to go. But I hate that the least weight should hang on my decision, — of me who am so unpromising a candidate for any society. At the name of a society all my repulsions play, all my quills rise and sharpen. I shall very shortly go or send to George Ripley my thoughts on the subject."

But it was foreordained that Mr. Emerson should not become a worker in a hive, and his true instinct saved him from obeying the urgency of his friends, yet he refused, as he said, "very slowly and almost with penitence."

Page 362, note 1. The letters of George W. Curtis to his friend, Mr. John S. Dwight, give an interesting picture of his manly and yet partly idyllic youth.[1]

[1] *Early Letters of George William Curtis to John S. Dwight.* Edited by George Willis Cooke. Harper & Bros., 1898.

Several members of the community have written of it, and it is pleasant to find the happy memories it left with them, in spite of its failure. It is also interesting that no one connected with that community wished any one but him or herself to make fun of it. Among the articles on Brook Farm are the following: "Reminiscences of Brook Farm," by George P. Bradford, *Century Magazine*, vol. xxiii., p. 141; "A Girl of Sixteen at Brook Farm," by Mrs. Sedgwick, *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. lxxxv., p. 394; and "A Visit to Brook Farm," by Mrs. Kirby, *Overland Monthly*, vol. v., p. 9. Lindsay Swift's *Brook Farm* is a good sketch of the community.

Page 363, note 1. The person here alluded to is Mr. Charles K. Newcomb, a youth of great virtue and charm, towards whom Mr. Emerson felt an unusual attraction all through his life. Mr. Newcomb's Hamlet-like temperament hindered him from obvious achievement in life, though he did service to his country as a private soldier during the Civil War. When he visited Concord he brought what he had lately written, and usually it gave Mr. Emerson pleasure, but his only published work that I know of is the paper in the *Dial* called "The Two Dolons."

Page 363, note 2. The "accomplished Doctor of Music" was Mr. John S. Dwight, the well-known musical critic. He is the person alluded to a little later, who would hoe corn on Sunday only.

Page 370, note 1. Mr. Emerson's attitude towards the reformers of the day was respectful. He honored their earnest seeking, and showed hospitality to their thoughts; but was not their dupe. His mind did not trouble itself with details, and he lived on a larger pattern, but honored them, as far as they went. He wrote in the journal: "In reference to the philanthropies of the day, it seems better to use than to flout them.

Shall it be said of the hero that he opposed all the contemporary good because it was not grand? I think it better to get their humble good and to catch the golden boon of purity and temperance and mercy from these poor [preachers and reformers]."

He wrote in his journal that one of his friends, a refined lady, asked him, Whether Reformers were not always in bad taste? "Oh no," he answered; "the poet, the saint, are not only elegant, but elegance. It is only the half-poet, the half-saint who disgust. Thus now the saint in us proposes, but the sinner in us executes so lamely. But who can be misled who trusts to a thought? That profound deep whereunto it leads is the Heaven of Heavens. On that pillow, softer than darkness, he that falls can never be bruised."

"The soul of a better quality thrusts back the unreasonable economy into the vaults of life, and says, I will obey the God, and the sacrifice and the fire he will provide. . . . The brave soul rates itself too high to value itself by the splendor of its table and draperies. It gives what it hath, and all it hath, but its own majesty can lend a better grace to bannocks and fair water than belong to city feasts.

"The temperance of the hero proceeds from the same wish to do no dishonor to the worthiness he has. But he loves it for its elegancy, not for its austerity. It seems not worth his while to be solemn and denounce with bitterness flesh-eating or wine-drinking, the use of tobacco, or opium, or tea, or silk, or gold. A great man scarcely knows how he dines, how he dresses; but without railing or precision his living is natural and poetic. John Eliot, the Indian Apostle, drank water, and said of wine, — 'It is a noble, generous liquor and we should be humbly thankful for it, but, as I remember, water was made before it.'" — "Heroism," *Essays, First Series.*

THE CHARDON STREET CONVENTION

The story of these remarkable meetings, under the name of the "Chardon Street and Bible Conventions," was written by Mr. Emerson for the *Dial* for July, 1842. The Chardon Street Convention, before breaking up, had appointed a "Committee to summon a new Convention to be styled 'the Bible Convention,' for the discussion of the credibility and authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments." By invitation of this Committee, the new Association met at the Masonic Temple in Boston, March 29, 1842. Of this thinly attended convention Mr. Emerson wrote: "Possibly from the greater unpopularity of its object, out of doors, some faintness or coldness surprised the members. At all events, it was hurried to a conclusion on the first day, to the great disappointment of many. Mr. Brownson, Mr. Alcott, Mr. West, and, among others, a Mormon preacher took part in the conversation. But according to the general testimony of those present, as far as we can collect it, the best speech made on that occasion was that of Mr. Nathaniel H. Whiting, of South Marshfield." Mr. Emerson says of him: "A plain, unlettered man, leaving for the day a mechanical employment to address his fellows, he possesses eminent gifts for success in an assembly so constituted." He obtained from Mr. Whiting the substance of his address, occupying eight pages of the magazine, to which his own *Dial* paper, here given, was the introduction.

Page 376, note 1. In the "Lecture on the Times,"

given the year after this convention, the following is the concluding passage: —

"Reality is all we prize, and . . . we are bound on our entrance into nature to speak for that. Let it not be recorded in our own memories that in this moment of the Eternity, when we who were named by our names flitted across the light, we were afraid of any fact, or disgraced the fair Day by a pusillanimous preference of our bread to our freedom. What is the scholar, what is the man for, but for hospitality to every new thought of his time? Have you leisure, power, property, friends? You shall be the asylum and patron of every new thought, every unproven opinion, every untried project which proceeds out of good will and honest seeking. All the newspapers, all the tongues of to-day will of course at first defame what is noble; but you who hold not of to-day, not of the times, but of the Everlasting, are to stand for it: and the highest compliment man ever receives from heaven is the sending to him its disguised and discredited angels." — *Nature, Addresses and Lectures.*

Page 376, note 2. This very convention was probably in Mr. Emerson's mind when he wrote in the first chapter of *Representative Men* these words: —

"I go to a convention of philanthropists. Do what I can, I cannot keep my eyes off the clock. But if there should appear in the company some gentle soul who knows little of persons or parties, of Carolina or Cuba, but who announces a law that disposes these particulars, and so certifies me of the equity which checkmates every false player, bankrupts every self-seeker, and apprises me of my independence on any conditions of country, or time, or human body, — that man liberates me; I forget the clock. I pass out of the sore relation to persons. I am healed of my hurts. I am made

immortal by apprehending my possession of incorruptible goods."

Page 377, note 1. Journal, 1841. "We concede, O Miss P. [Peabody ?], there is a difference between the spirit in which these poor men struggling to emancipate themselves from the yoke of a traditional worship, and crying out in their sorrow and hope, speak at the Chardon Street Convention, and the spirit in which he who is long already free from these fears turns back and knowingly shoots sarcasms at the old and venerated names."

EZRA RIPLEY, D. D.

This sketch was written for the Social Circle, a club in Concord dating from the close of the Revolution. During that struggle the notables of the town, formed into a Committee of Safety, had come together from their farms, shops or offices to raise men for the army and provide for them in the field. After the war was over they missed these friendly gatherings for the common good, and so in 1782 organized the Circle, "to strengthen the social affections, and disseminate useful communications among its members." The minister of the town was not, however, chosen a member until 1785. Mr. Emerson was a member from 1839 for the rest of his life. After the death of Dr. Ripley, who was his step-grandfather, he was asked to prepare the customary Memoir for the Club-Book. It was enlarged from a notice printed by him in the *Middlesex Yeoman* at the time of Dr. Ripley's death.

Mr. Emerson himself enjoyed the club, which met at the house of each of the twenty-five members in turn from Octo-

ber to April. The hours were from seven to nine in the evening, for, when he joined, a large part of the members were farmers. The Circle held strictly to its formation, the company, sitting upright in their chairs around the small parlor of the entertainer, strove to keep the conversation general. Just before they went home they partook of simple refreshment, — apples, nuts and raisins, sometimes cake, and cider or chocolate for drink. Mr. Emerson wrote to a city friend in 1844: —

"Much the best society I have ever known is a club in Concord called the Social Circle, consisting always of twenty-five of our citizens, doctor, lawyer, farmer, trader, miller, mechanic, etc., solidest of men, who yield the solidest of gossip. Harvard University is a water compared to the solid land which my friends represent. I do not like to be absent from home on Tuesday evenings in winter."

The celebration of the birthday of Emerson held in Concord, May 25, 1903, was under the auspices of the Social Circle.

Page 382, note 1. The following information regarding this subject is gathered from Shattuck's *History of Concord*: —

"The buildings of Harvard College were occupied as barracks for the American army, while stationed at Cambridge, and the students were dispersed. The college was removed to Concord and commenced its operations on the first of October, 1775. President Langdon lived at Dr. Minot's [on the Common, where until a few years since the Middlesex Hotel stood]; Professor Sewall lived at James Jones's; Professor Wigglesworth at the Bates place on the Bedford Road; and Professor Winthrop at Darius Merriam's, near which was the library and philosophical apparatus. . . . The students boarded

. . . in many different places. The recitations were at the court-house and meeting-house. Prayers were attended at the latter place.

"The following proceedings of the government of the college were communicated to the town when it was about to be removed to Cambridge:—

"'CONCORD, June 12, 1776.

"'At a meeting of the President, Professors, and Tutors of Harvard College, voted, that the following address of thanks be presented by the president to the selectmen, the gentlemen of the committee, and other gentlemen and inhabitants of the town of Concord, who have favored the college with their encouragement and assistance, in its removal to this town, by providing accommodations.

"'Gentlemen, — The assistance you have afforded us in obtaining accommodations for this society here, when Cambridge was filled with the glorious army of freemen, which was assembled to hazard their lives in their country's cause, and our removal from thence became necessary, demands our grateful acknowledgments.

"'We have observed with pleasure the many tokens of your friendship to the college; and particularly thank you for the use of your public buildings. We hope the scholars while here have not dishonored themselves and the society by any incivilities or indecencies of behaviour, or that you will readily forgive any errors which may be attributed to the inadvertencies of youth.

"'May God reward you with all his blessings, grant us a quiet re-settlement in our ancient seat to which we are now returning, preserve America from slavery, and establish and continue religion, learning, liberty, peace, and the happiest

government in these American Colonies to the end of the world.

"'SAMUEL LANGDON, President.

"'Per order.'"

Page 383, note 1. Phebe was the eldest daughter of Rev. Daniel Bliss, the zealous pastor of the Concord Church from 1738 until his death in 1764. Then the young William Emerson was summoned from his teacher's desk at Reading to supply the pulpit for a few weeks. His preaching pleased the people, and in the end of 1765 he was chosen pastor by the church, and their action confirmed by the town at the "March meeting." He boarded with the widow of his predecessor, and fell in love with Phebe, whom he married, and in 1769 built the Manse by the Old North Bridge, "a nest for his phebe-bird." He was an eager Son of Liberty, and fanned the flame of patriotism of his parishioners at the outbreak of the Revolution. In August, 1776, having obtained from the church leave of absence for the purpose, he joined the Northern army at Ticonderoga as chaplain, but in October sickened and died of fever. Four years after his death his widow married the young successor, the subject of this Memoir.

Dr. Ripley was always kind and hospitable to the Emerson children and grandchildren of his wife. He especially befriended the widow of William the younger, with her five boys, who thus learned to regard Concord as a home. This determined Waldo's settling there, and on his return from Europe in 1834, while looking for a house in Concord, he stayed with Dr. Ripley, and much of "Nature" was written at the Manse.

Page 384, note 1. Rev. Joseph Emerson, the minister of Malden for years. He married Mary, the daughter of Rev.

Samuel Moody of York, Maine, a good but eccentric man, and a rugged and powerful preacher. Joseph Emerson was a devoted scholar. Mr. Emerson recorded with pleasure this anecdote of him, — that he said after he had read the *Iliad* that he should be sorry to think that the men and cities he read of never existed.

Three of his sons were ministers, Joseph of Pepperell, William of Concord and John of Conway, Massachusetts.

Page 385, note 1. In previous editions this has been printed "repent this Providence," but I am quite sure that this was an error arising from Mr. Emerson's habitual use of the old-fashioned long *s*. "Resent" was then used in a good as well as a bad sense to signify the reaction of the mind on any event. Rev. William Emerson, the son of Joseph, in writing to his wife of the narrow escape from death of her two brothers who were in the crowd at the Boston Massacre, so-called, said: "However afflicting such a Scene as y^e^ Murder of y^e^ 4 above mentioned, yet to you and I it is more sensibly felt, & ought to be gratefully resented, the very wonderful Preservation of our dear Brothers, Theo^r^ and Sam^l^."

Page 386, note 1. In his journal for 1834 Mr. Emerson notes: "Dr. Ripley prays for rain with great explicitness on Sunday, and on Monday the showers fell. When I spoke of the speed with which his prayers were answered, the good man looked modest." When Dr. Ripley was old and feeble and also deaf, Rev. Hersey B. Goodwin was associated with him as pastor, and their relations were pleasant. One Sunday Mr. Goodwin exchanged with Rev. Octavius B. Frothingham, then a young minister and unacquainted with the old-time formalities connected with the church and the aged pastor. Arriving early, the clergyman from Boston took his

place in the pulpit and soon heard the Doctor's voice at the entrance inquiring for him, and tones of disapproval when it appeared that he had not waited for the senior pastor. On ascending the pulpit, Dr. Ripley read and handed over to Mr. Frothingham the customary notes sent up by families or individuals, in affliction or in joy, desiring by name the prayers of the congregation. When the prayer was over, Dr. Ripley, who had leaned forward to hear with his hand to his ear, was heard by the congregation to say, "But you have n't prayed for our afflicted members." Mr. Frothingham had to explain, in voice loud enough to make the Doctor hear, that it was his custom not to read notes aloud nor to pray for individuals, but to frame a general petition including all, to which the Doctor severely answered in a voice audible to the congregation, "Well, *it is a very bad custom*, and the sooner you change it the better!"

Page 387, note 1. The Manse stood close by the Old North Bridge, and Mr. Emerson, while a guest there in 1864, writes: "Francis comes to Dr. Ripley at breakfast to know whether he shall drive the cow into the battle-field."

Page 391, note 1. He was a member of the old Fire Association of Concord, founded in 1794. Mr. Emerson was also a member, and over the stairway in his house always hung the two leathern fire-buckets and green baize bag for saving property.

Page 392, note 1. This was the remark of Mr. Emerson's brother Edward.

Page 394, note 1. Journal, 1834, "I listened yesterday as always to Dr. Ripley's prayer in the mourning house with tenfold the hope and tenfold chance of some touch of nature that should melt us, that I should have felt in the rising of one

of the Boston preachers of proprieties — the fair house of Seem. These old semi-savages do from the solitude in which they live and their remoteness from artificial society and their inevitable daily comparing man with beast, village with wilderness, their inevitable acquaintance with the outward nature of man, and with his strict dependence on sun and rain and wind and frost, wood, worm, cow and bird, get an education to the Homeric simplicity, which all the libraries of the Reviews and the Commentators in Boston do not countervail."

Journal, 1840. "Dr. Ripley is no dandy, but speaks with the greatest simplicity and gravity. He preaches, however, to a congregation of Dr. Ripleys; Daniel Webster to an assembly of Websters. Could this belief of theirs be verified in the audience, each would be esteemed the best of all speakers."

Page 395, note 1. Journal, 1841. "Sept. 21. Dr. Ripley died this morning. The fall of this oak of ninety years makes some sensation in the forest, old and doomed as it was. . . . His body is a handsome and noble spectacle. My mother was moved just now to call it 'the beauty of the dead.' . . . I carried Waldo to see him and he testified neither repulsion nor surprise, but only the quietest curiosity. He was ninety years old, yet this face has the tension and resolution of vigorous manhood. . . . A man is but a little thing in the midst of these great objects of Nature, yet a man by his moral quality may abolish all thoughts of magnitude, and in his manners equal the majesty of the world."

MARY MOODY EMERSON

Mary Moody Emerson, the daughter of Rev. William Emerson of Concord and Phebe Bliss, his wife, was born in 1775, and lived until 1863. She was the younger sister of Mr. Emerson's father. When Madam Emerson was left a widow in straitened circumstances with five little boys, their aunt used often to visit them, awakened their interest in literature and in character, and by constant correspondence with her favorites, Waldo and Charles, spurred their ambition, led them on to discussion of authors and principles, criticised their thought and expression, and elevated their standards. Although the words seem grotesque when applied to this ascetic enthusiast and devotee, she had many of the characteristics and faults now commonly associated with the "artistic temperament." She was a born painter in words, was odd in speech and dress, impulsive and abrupt, and so whimsical and exacting as to have to constantly seek, up and down New England, for a new boarding-place. Once when she wrote a prayer for "peace in our borders," some one pointed out that she had written *boarders*, but Miss Emerson said, "Let it stand."

With all her oddities, she was always welcome to her nephew. Writing to her in 1839 he urged her to come again to Concord, "this old, dear, odious haunt of the race," the "odious" referring to her unpleasant remembrance of having her youthful waywardness checked by her good stepfather, Dr. Ripley, on her early visits at the Manse. To her remarkable degree of literary culture, though almost unschooled and brought up by relatives who had hardly more than the reading

of the Bible gave, her nephew owed much; but more to her native gifts, the fire of her piety, her zeal for learning, her brilliant expression and the unsparing criticism, which yet could but thinly mask her affection.

Her humor tempered her oddities to those who had the wit to detect it. The few persons who did not always give way to her whims, but dared meet steel with steel, and not allow themselves to be browbeaten, fared best with her. Soon after the Rev. Grindall Reynolds began his long and useful ministry in the church of her ancestors, Miss Emerson, then eighty years old, waited on the porch until he came out, genially talking with his parishioners, and in their presence rebuked him for laughing in the sacred precincts. "Miss Emerson," said the minister pleasantly, "my father, years ago, tried to break me of the habit, but failed, and I 'm afraid you will: but, Madam, I perceive that you are smiling." "Ah, but it is a sardonic smile," she answered.

A few years later Mr. Emerson gathered a company of friends and neighbors at his house to hear Mr. Alcott converse. Anxious that some of his friends from the city should find the pleasure and profit that he himself did in Mr. Alcott's thought, he invited, among others, Mr. Henry James, senior. Mr. James, supposing that in a "Conversation" more than one could take part, and being a born dialectician, presently took issue with Mr. Alcott and harassed him with questions, to his great discomfiture, and, with characteristic originality in use of terms, began a witty diatribe upon Morals, meaning thereby self-conscious moral action. Mr. Alcott, who had much less skill in fence even than Mr. Emerson, was driven from the field. Then from her chair arose Miss Emerson, eighty-four years old, to her full height of some four and a half feet, crossed the parlor to where Mr. James, looking like a kindly

Socrates, sat, took him by the shoulders and roundly rebuked his levity, shaking him the while. Mr. James was delighted, and treated her with most chivalrous respect, and, slighting Mr. Alcott, gave her the honors of the tournament. An account of this conversation is given in the *Familiar Letters* of Thoreau. Miss Emerson liked Thoreau and they always had pleasant relations.

In 1855 he wrote: —

"Miss Mary Emerson is here, — the youngest person in Concord, though about eighty, — and the most apprehensive of a genuine thought; earnest to know of your inner life; most stimulating society; and exceedingly witty withal.

"She says they called her old when she was young, and she has never grown any older. I wish you could see her."

Mr. Emerson so valued his aunt's writings, especially her journals, which, like his own, were occupied with thoughts, — events being only alluded to, — that he frequently read in them, and copied into four books of the size of his journals long passages from them and from her letters. At the beginning of the first of these he wrote: —

"E. T. E.'s notice of M. M. E. in her Journal.

'Morning dawns; and Hartford, though
Pleasantly its pictures glow,
We must leave; and one who seems
Like a vision in our dreams.
She will dwell upon our mind,
Flesh and blood so well refined
That one questions whether death,
Wasted form, or loss of breath
Will be in her path to heaven, —
All her body seems to glow
With her spirit's action so.'"

This account of his aunt's life was read by Mr. Emerson before the Woman's Club in Boston, in 1869, under the title "Anita." "The Nun's Aspiration," in the *Poems*, which was a rendering into verse of a passage in his aunt's diary, at first bore the same name. Part of this poem serves as the motto to this sketch.

Page 402, note 1. Mr. Emerson wrote, about the year 1837: "I doubt if the interior and spiritual history of New England could be truelier told than through the exhibition of family history such as this, the picture of this group of M. M. E. and the boys, mainly Charles. The genius of that woman, the key to her life is in the conflict of the new and the old ideas in New England. The heir of whatever was rich and profound and efficient in thought and emotion in the old religion which planted and peopled this land, she strangely united to this passionate piety the fatal gift of penetration, a love of philosophy, an impatience of words, and was thus a religious skeptic. She held on with both hands to the faith of the past generation as to the Palladium of all that was good and hopeful in the physical and metaphysical worlds, and in all companies and on all occasions and especially with these darling nephews of her hope and pride, extolled and poetised this beloved Calvinism. Yet all the time she doubted and denied it, and could not tell whether to be more glad or sorry to find that these boys were irremediably born to the adoption and furtherance of the new ideas. She reminds me of Margaret Graeme, the enthusiast in Scott's *Abbot*, who lives to infuse into the young Roland her enthusiasm for the Roman church, only that *our* Margaret doubted while she loved. Milton and Young were the poets endeared to the generation she represented. Of Milton they were proud, but I fancy

their religion has never found so faithful a picture as in the *Night Thoughts*. These combined traits in M. M. E.'s character gave the new direction to her hope, that these boys should be richly and holily qualified and bred to purify the old faith of what narrowness and error adhered to it, and import all its fire into the new age — such a gift should her Prometheus bring to men. She hated the poor, low, thin, unprofitable, unpoetical Humanitarians as the devastators of the Church and robbers of the Soul, and never wearies with piling on them new terms of slight and weariness. 'Ah!' she said, 'what a poet would Byron have been, if he had been born and bred a Calvinist!'"

Page 403, note 1. Reading over her letters to him and his brothers, Mr. Emerson wrote in 1864: —

"Aunt Mary, whose letters I read all yesterday afternoon, is a genius always new, subtile, frolicsome, musical, unpredictable. All your learning of all literatures and states of society, Platonistic, Calvinistic, English or Chinese, would never enable you to anticipate one thought or expression. She is embarrassed by no Moses or Paul, no Angelo or Shakspeare after whose type she is to fashion her speech; her wit is the wild horse of the desert, who snuffs the sirocco and scours the palm-grove without having learned his paces in the Stadium or at Tattersall's. What liberal joyful architecture, liberal and manifold as the vegetation from the earth's bosom, or the creations of frostwork on the window! Nothing can excel the freedom and felicity of her letters — such nobility is in this self-rule, this absence of all reference to style or standard; it is the march of the mountain winds, the waving of flowers, or the flight of birds. But a man can hardly be a reader of books without acquiring their average tone, as one who walks with a military procession involuntarily falls into step."

Yet, in spite of her oddities and of her piety of old New England, because of her quality and the directness and grandeur of her thought and expression her nephew wrote: —

"I believe that this Greek genius is ever reappearing, and that each of us knows one or more of the class. Aunt Mary is a Greek, and I have more in memory. Every child is a Greek."

Page 409, note 1. Her joy that her beloved nephews should drink freely at the fountains of knowledge, for which every day of her life she had so eagerly thirsted, is touching. It is shown in this letter written to William Emerson just before he sailed for Germany to pursue his studies at Göttingen in 1823: —

"I have thought of you often in the past week, in which I have gone through the 1st volume of Michaelis's *Introduction to the New Testament*. I beg when you come to antient MSS, to Latin versions and above all to the history of the Syrian antient version, you will write to me. What fields of knowledge as well as of labour lie before you! This author, so learned, so famous, says no clergyman ought to be ignorant of the Hebrew, Syriac and rabbinical language. Then *remember me*. And I do believe, take all our intercourse from the first promise of your childhood to the present, that you are in debt to me for affection. After you have spent long years in sacrificing ease and fine things, then repay me by one single learned letter."

Page 412, note 1. Dr. Holmes in reference to this and some other passages quoted by Mr. Emerson in this sketch says: "There are many sentences cited by Mr. Emerson from the journal of his Aunt Mary which remind us very strongly of his own writings. Such a passage as the following might have come from his essay 'Nature,' but it was written when her nephew was only four years old."

Page 415, note 1. The memory of the devout attitude of the guides of his youth towards Nature remained with Mr. Emerson in his days of emancipation: —

"Life is ecstatical, and we radiate joy and honor and gloom in the days and landscapes we converse with. But I must remember a real or imagined period in my youth when they who spoke to me of Nature were religious, and made it so, and made it deep: now it is to the young sentimentalists frippery, and a milliner's shop has as much reason and worth."

In his journal of 1837, he wrote blessing his star, "which rained on me influences of ancestral religion. The depth of the religious sentiment which I knew in my Aunt Mary, imbuing all her genius, and derived to her from such hoarded family traditions, from so many godly lives and godly deaths of sainted kindred, at Concord, at Malden and York, was itself a culture, an education. I heard with awe her tales, etc.

. . . . . .

"In my childhood Aunt Mary herself wrote the prayers which first my brother William and, when he went to college, I read aloud morning and evening at the family devotions, and they still sound in my ear with their prophetic and apocalyptic ejaculations. Religion was her occupation, and when, years after, I came to write sermons for my own church, I could not find any examples or treasures of piety so high-toned, so profound or promising such rich influence, as my remembrance of her conversation and letters."

Page 426, note 1. Commenting upon this passage, Dr. Holmes said, "Miss Mary Emerson showed something of the same feeling towards natural science which may be noted in her nephews Waldo and Charles."

Page 428, note 1. Mr. Cabot in his Memoir gives extracts

from letters passing between Miss Emerson and her nephew when he was studying divinity in Cambridge. The disbelief that he rashly ventures to express in the orthodox scheme of salvation draws upon his head and upon the college a torrent of scornful eloquence from the zealous aunt, who, Mr. Emerson said, "wished every one to be a Calvinist but herself." The nephew seems to have seen no need for the Mediation, for the aunt bursts forth, —

"He talks of the Holy Ghost: God of mercy, what a subject! Holy Ghost given to every man in Eden; it was lost in the great contest going on in the vast universe, — it was lost, stifled; it was re-given embodied in the assumed humanity of the Son of God. And since, — the reward of prayer, agony, self-immolation! Dost not like the faith and the means? Take thy own or rather the dictates of fashion. . . . Would to God thou wert more ambitious, — respected thyself more and the world less. Thou wouldst not to Cambridge. True, they use the name *Christo*, but that venerable institution, it is thought, has become but a feeble, ornamental arch in the great temple which the Christian world maintains to the honor of his name. . . .

"The nature and limits of human virtue, its dangers, its origin, 'questions answered at Cambridge, easily,' — God, forgive thy child his levity, — subjects veiled in something of Thine own awful incomprehensibility, soothed only by the faith which reason leaves, but can never describe." . . .

Page 433, note 1. The abiding influence which this spurring, guiding, rebuking and loving enthusiast in her lonely life had on her nephew, whose taste, whose motives, character and style she helped to form, may be judged by these extracts from his journal: —

1866. "Read M. M. E.'s MSS. yesterday many pages.

They keep for me the old attraction, though when I sometimes have tried passages on a stranger, I find something of fairy gold: — they need too much commentary, and are not as incisive as on me. They make the best example I have known of the power of the religion of the Puritans in full energy, until fifty years ago, in New England. The central theme of these endless diaries is, her relation to the Divine Being; the absolute submission of her will, with the sole proviso that she may know it is the direct agency of God (and not of cold laws of contingency, etc.) which bereaves and humiliates her. But the religion of the diary, as of the class it represented, is biographical; it is the culture, the poetry, the mythology, in which they personally believed themselves dignified, inspired, judged and dealt with, in the present and in the future; and certainly gives to life an earnestness and to nature a sentiment, which lacking, our later generation appears frivolous."

And again: —

"Yesterday I read an old file of Aunt Mary's letters, and felt how she still gains by all comparison with later friends. Never any gave higher counsels, as E. H. most truly said, nor played with all the household incidents with more wit and humor. My life and its early events never look trivial in her letters, but full of eyes, and acquire deepest expression."

SAMUEL HOAR

Page 437, note 1. This paper reflects the gloom which settled on the friends of Freedom in the North on the fourth of November, 1856, when James Buchanan was chosen President of the United States. On that day this sketch was written. It was first printed in *Putnam's Magazine*.

Page 437, note 2. The State of South Carolina having, between the years 1820 and 1835, passed several Acts with purpose "to restrain the emancipation of slaves and to prevent free persons of color from entering" the State, resulting in the imprisonment of many citizens of Massachusetts (seamen on coasting vessels) during the stay of the vessels at Charleston, and the whipping or selling them as slaves should they return, various resolves of protest against this outrage were passed by the General Court of Massachusetts. To these the offending State turned a deaf ear. The Acts of South Carolina being obviously unconstitutional, it was desired to bring some cases before the Supreme Court, but it proved impossible to do so without collecting evidence in Charleston. After all other means had failed, the General Court passed in 1844 the following resolve concerning the imprisonment of citizens in other States: —

"*Resolved*, That His Excellency the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Council, be hereby authorized to employ an agent for the port of Charleston, South Carolina, and an agent for the port of New Orleans, whose duty it shall be to reside in said port, for a term not exceeding one year, for the purposes specified in the resolves relating to this subject, passed on the twenty-fourth of March, in the year one thousand eight hundred and forty-three. And that His Excellency the Governor be hereby authorized to draw his warrant to cover any necessary expenses incurred in carrying into effect this or the aforementioned resolves, after the same shall have been audited and allowed by the Council, to be paid out of the public treasury."

I copy from the Report of the Joint Special Committee of the Senate of Massachusetts their statement as to the treatment of the Agent of Massachusetts by the people of Charleston,

and the subsequent Acts of the Legislature of South Carolina. This report was made February 3, 1845 (Senate Document, No. 31), and is signed by Charles Francis Adams: —

"Under the authority conferred by this resolve the Governor of the Commonwealth appointed Samuel Hoar, a respected citizen of Massachusetts, the agent for the port of Charleston, to perform the duty specifically assigned him and no more. That gentleman repaired to Charleston, endeavored to commence upon his task, and, simply because he attempted so to do, was driven by threats of personal violence of a mob from the territory of South Carolina. And the Legislature of that State subsequently sanctioned the act of the people, by recording on her statute-book an order for the expulsion, as a dangerous emissary of sedition, of this single, inoffensive, unarmed man. And the same Legislature has passed a law making it a highly penal offence in any person, whether citizen or stranger, ever to attempt the like again."

This Committee made a Protest and a Declaration of the history of maltreatment of our citizens and the measures taken in the case by Massachusetts and South Carolina, which they recommended should be sent to the President and to the Governors of all the States.

Page 459, note 1. Mr. Hoar was born in May, 1778, in Lincoln, the portion that belonged to Concord until the incorporation of Lincoln in 1754. He graduated at Harvard College in 1802, was admitted to the bar and moved to Concord in 1805. He was a member of the Convention for revising the Constitution of Massachusetts in 1821, and was in the State Senate in 1825.

Two of his sons attained eminence in public life, Ebenezer Rockwood at the bar and on the bench, and as Attorney-General of the United States during Grant's administration,

and George Frisbie as Representative and Senator through many Congresses.

Page 441, note 1. Journal. "The beauty of character takes long time to discover. Who that should come into Concord but would laugh if you told him that Samuel Hoar was beautiful, yet I thought one day when he passed, the rainbow, geometry itself is not handsomer than that walking sincerity, straitly bounded as it is."

Journal, 1838. "I know a man who tries time. The expression of his face is that of a patient judge who has nowise made up his opinion, who fears nothing, and even hopes nothing, but puts nature on its merits. He will hear the case out and then decide."

Page 441, note 2. Sir Henry Wotton's "The Happy Life."

Page 442, note 1. A client met his counsel at the court-room door in Concord, and said, "How is our case getting on?" "We are nowhere!" snapped the disgusted lawyer; "there 's only one man of any sense on the jury, and he thinks that Sam Hoar was the making of him."

Journal, 1849. "It is not any new light he sheds on the case, but his election of a side and the giving his statuesque dignity to that side, that weighs with juries or with conventions. For he does this naturally."

Journal, 1864. "I should say of Samuel Hoar what Clarendon writes of Sir Thomas Coventry, that 'he had a strange power of making himself believed, the only justifiable design of eloquence.'"

Page 444, note 1. The following passage from the journal of 1844 occurs with slight changes, and the omission of the name, in the chapter on Montaigne, in *Representative Men:*

"Men are edificant or otherwise. Samuel Hoar is to all

men's eyes conservative and constructive: his presence supposes a well-ordered society, agriculture, trade, large institutions and empire; if these things did not exist, they would begin to exist through his steady will and endeavors. Therefore he cheers and comforts men, who feel all this in him very readily. The reformer, the rebel, who comes by, says all manner of unanswerable things against the existing republic, but discovers to my groping Dæmon no plan of house or empire of his own. Therefore, though Samuel Hoar's town and State are a very cheap and modest commonwealth, men very rightly go for him and flout the reformer."

Page 446, note 1. From Cowper's *Task*.

Page 446, note 2. The father of "Squire Hoar," as he was called in Concord, was also Samuel Hoar, who represented Lincoln in the General Court almost continuously from 1794 to 1808, and was Senator from 1813 to 1817. John Hoar, an ancestor, was the first representative of the law in Concord, during the seventeenth century. He was independent and eccentric, and incurred censure and fine for speaking with disrespect of the minister. During King Philip's War he displayed great courage and humanity on behalf of the Praying Indians.

THOREAU

In May, 1862, Thoreau died, at the age of forty-four, in Concord, where he was born. Consumption had been in his family, and attacked even his rugged frame after an unusual exposure, the sitting long in the snow counting the growth-rings on some stumps. His illness was long and progressive,

but his courage and good cheer, and his affection towards his family, showed throughout. He worked on his manuscripts until within a few weeks of his death. In a remarkable letter written about six weeks before it occurred, he said, "I *suppose* I have not many months to live; but of course I know nothing about it. I may add that I am enjoying existence as much as ever and regret nothing." [1] His funeral services were held in the meeting-house of the First Church. His neighbor the Rev. Mr. Reynolds made the prayer, a poem by his friend William Ellery Channing was sung, and Mr. Emerson made the address. In the following August his remarks, with some additions, were printed in the present form in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

In 1837 Mrs. Emerson's elder sister, Mrs. Lucy C. Brown, who boarded in the Thoreau family, and to whom many of Thoreau's published letters were written, called Mr. Emerson's attention to the independence of the thoughts, and the similarity to his own, of some writings of the young Henry, who had just graduated from Harvard College. Mr. Emerson was interested, and asked her to bring her young friend to see him. Thus began a friendship which, in spite of the difference of fourteen years in their ages, and of temperamental impediments to its fullest enjoyment, was deep and lasting. In the spring of 1841 Thoreau, by Mr. Emerson's invitation, came to live in his family like a younger brother, giving help in the care of the garden and poultry, and applying his Yankee "faculty" to any household exigency, yet having much of his time for his own pursuits. He bore the severe test of close association well, and won increasing respect and regard from his host and hostess. With such a master of arts in the house, Mr. Emer-

[1] *Familiar Letters of Henry David Thoreau*, edited by F. B. Sanborn. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1895.

son was relieved of many questions, cares and tasks that he had no fitness to deal with, though he often worked in the garden with his friend. Thoreau showed a chivalric devotion to Mrs. Emerson, or more properly, regarded her as a priestess, as his fine letters to her show. His treatment of children, who always delighted in him, was perfect, — a delightful playfellow, yet always with reverence for childhood. In the note to the poem "Threnody" is an extract from Mr. Emerson's journal telling of his friend's devotion to little Waldo.

When Thoreau's years of teaching and pencil-making and the Walden episode were over, he came once more into his friend's home, this time to be man-of-the-house during Mr. Emerson's absence in England in 1847–48, and again his conduct of his trust was perfect. To know Thoreau as he was, the reading of his *Familiar Letters*, above alluded to, and the extracts from his journal, must supplement the reading of the books published by him. In them, as in conversation with men who were his friends, there was a tendency to startle, to controvert and to provoke argument. This was inherited from the Scotch Dunbar blood on his mother's side, and was a distinct misfortune, standing in the way of perfect relations. In his letters the true, pure man and loyal friend appears. Living so long, at the most impressionable age, in close relation with an older friend and scholar, whom he honored, and with whose views, then considered heretical, he sympathized, it was not unnatural that his manner of thought and his style should have been legitimately influenced, and even some superficial trick of manner or speech unconsciously acquired. Hence the charge of imitation has been brought against Thoreau. Doubtless his growth was stimulated by kindred ideas. This is all that can be granted. Utter independence, strong individuality distinguished him. His one

foible was, not subserviency, but combativeness, mainly from mere love of fence when he found a worthy adversary, as his best friends knew almost too well.

Although their personal relations could not be close, each held the other in highest honor. In 1852 Mr. Emerson wrote in his journal: —

"I am my own man more than most men, yet the loss of a few persons would be most impoverishing, a few persons who give flesh to what were else mere thoughts, and which now I am not at liberty to slight or in any manner treat as fictions. [He speaks of Alcott, and then goes on.] And Thoreau gives me in flesh and blood and pertinacious Saxon belief my own ethics. He is far more real, and daily practically obeying them than I, and fortifies my memory at all times with an affirmative experience which refuses to be set aside."

This sketch of Thoreau by a friend who had known him for twenty-five years with increasing respect for the genuineness of his knowledge, the truth of his mind and the nobility of his character, is important as a corrective to the essay on Thoreau by Lowell, who knew little of him directly. Yet Lowell, after some nine pages of ridicule, which is what catches the eye and leaves the impression on the casual reader, says in a page or two what, if true, should make all that precedes as dust in the balance.

Page 451, note 1. Thoreau records that he did not cry when, at the age of three months, he was baptized by the venerable Puritan Dr. Ripley. In college both he and Emerson won disapproval from the authorities, and great and permanent advantage for themselves, by introducing the elective system in their own cases. It escaped Mr. Emerson's

notice that Thoreau had a "Part" at his Commencement: with a classmate he had a Conference on "The Commercial Spirit," which, it is unnecessary to say, he attacked. This paper, written at the age of twenty, has the originality and beauty which characterized his later writing. Mr. Sanborn gives extracts from it in the *Familiar Letters*.

With regard to the French, or more properly Breton, element in Thoreau, Mr. Emerson quotes a friend as saying: "Here is the precise *voyageur* of Canada sublimed or carried up to the seventh power. In the family, the brother and one sister preserved the French character of face."

With regard to the private school of John and Henry Thoreau, I collected the testimony, some twenty years since, of such of the scholars as I could find, and all but one (who was not very bright and had been among the younger pupils) had remembered it as a privilege of their lives; they loved John and respected Henry.

Page 452, note 1. It is a fact not generally known, for Thoreau did not deign to notice the gossip of his neighbors, that when he left his father's occupation of the lead-pencil manufacture because he wished to do business with the Celestial City, his family, largely through his means, had a lucrative business. His reading in college gave him the knowledge of the best ingredient to mix with the plumbago, for which purpose bay-berry wax had hitherto been used here. His own ingenuity probably had a large part in the invention of a simple but perfect way of grinding the lead to an impalpable powder. Thus the greasiness and grit of American lead-pencils were got rid of. The new art of electrotyping demanded the best plumbago, and the Thoreaus had practically the monopoly by the excellence of their lead. After the death of his father, even up to the time of his own illness, Henry gave

necessary oversight to the mill in Acton, and helped in the heavier part of packing the product, when necessary.

Page 453, note 1. The first mention of Thoreau in Mr. Emerson's journal is on February 11, 1838: —

"At the 'teachers' meeting' last night my good ——, after disclaiming any wish to difference Jesus from a human mind, suddenly seemed to alter his tone and said that Jesus made the world and was the Eternal God. Henry Thoreau merely remarked that 'Mr. —— had kicked the pail over.' I delight much in my young friend, who seems to have as free and erect a mind as any I have ever met."

His friend copied with pleasure from Thoreau's journal of 1855 and 1856 the following notes of heroic satisfaction in asceticism: —

"What you call bareness and poverty is to me simplicity."

And again: —

"Ah! how I have thriven on solitude and poverty. I cannot overstate this advantage."

Page 454, note 1. The statements here made, though true in spirit, need a little qualification. As a boy and youth he was expert as a hunter, and notably so as a fisherman. The gun and rod are almost invariably the first guides of a lover of Nature to wood and stream. He soon passed through this novitiate. His last use of the gun was probably when he confesses to have "effected the transmigration of a woodchuck" which was destroying his bean-crop at Walden, but the pond fed him occasionally with her fishes, and he caught and procured many specimens of all the Concord fishes for Agassiz's collection. While never man cared less what he ate, and he could have lived simply as an Esquimau without complaint, he was a man of too large pattern to live by any rule of thumb. Much foolish outcry was raised because he was

too kindly a son to thrust back the little gifts which his loving mother, when he went to see her, sometimes begged him to take back with him to his cabin. At the table of friends he ate what was set before him, instead of making the self-conscious protests of contemporary reformers. Many persons now gone have testified to the writer, what he also remembers well, the charm and the helpfulness of Thoreau's society. He was the best of sons and brothers, and lived at home all but the two years of his life spent at Walden, the years when he was at college, and the short period when he taught in Staten Island. While always helpful, he kept his mind, his hands and feet free from all bondage.

Page 455, note 1. "We dine," he said, "at the sign of the scrub-oak."

Page 456, note 1. This was Mr. Emerson's own remark.

Page 457, note 1. Some lines of William Morris, from the Proem to the *Earthly Paradise*, exactly describe Thoreau's gift to his townspeople in the old Lyceum, on those dreary winter nights when he read us his "Wild Apples" or "Autumnal Tints":[1] —

> "Folk say, a wizard to a Northern king
> At Christmas-tide such wondrous things did show,
> That through one window men beheld the Spring,
> And through another saw the Summer glow,
> And through a third the fruited vines a-row,
> While still, unheard, yet in its wonted way,
> Piped the drear wind of that December day."

Page 458, note 1. Thoreau had become disgusted with the Government at the time of the Mexican War. He said

[1] These lectures are printed in Thoreau's *Excursions*.

that only once a year did he come in contact with it in the person of the tax-collector, and refusal to pay his tax seemed his obvious way of protest against the evil measures of the day. He thus washed his hands of any share, possibly not knowing that his town and county tax went entirely for innocent and useful purposes. Samuel Staples, at once the tax-gatherer, constable and jailer, a downright friendly man, offered to pay the small tax for him, but Thoreau would not allow this, so Staples said, "Henry, if you don't pay, I shall have to lock you up pretty soon." "As well now as any time, Sam," was the answer. "Well, come along then," said Staples, and put him in jail. The tax was left at the jailer's house next day when he was away from home. He told me that he never knew who paid it, but, if I recollect rightly, said that he supposed that it was Miss Elizabeth Hoar, or her father, through his hands. Of course then he released his prisoner, and, as he said earlier concerning Mr. Alcott's refusal to pay taxes, "I vum, I believe it was nothing but principle," held the same opinion of Thoreau's action. They were always good friends. Mr. Staples, coming out from visiting Thoreau during his sickness, met Mr. Emerson coming in, and said to him, "I never saw a man dying with so much pleasure and peace."

Page 461, note 1. The vestry of the Unitarian church was filled. There stood this man, ordinarily keeping quite clear of political matters, except in occasional protest against slavery and its aggressions, now stirred to the core, and in praise of a hero after his own heart speaking to his rather cool audience, made up in great part of timid people, with the eloquence of passion. The effect, as I recall it, was wonderful. Many of "those who came to scoff remained to pray."

Page 462, note 1. His manly sincerity in speaking the

true and elevating word, as shown in his letters, is unsurpassed. His counsel had weight because in requiring life on a high plane he was even more severe with himself than with others.

Page 466, note 1. An over-familiar, officious clergyman, or a gentleman with the conceit of society, or a patronizing editor, found Thoreau, as his friend said of him, "a gendarme good to knock down Cockneys with." Not so the simple, direct people who minded their business, whether scholars, mechanics or laborers. With them he had good relations. He took an active and humane interest in his poor Irish neighbors, lately arrived, and took their part when cheated by mean employers.

Page 467, note 1. "Even the facts of science," he said, "may dust the mind by their dryness, unless they are in a sense effaced by the dews of fresh and living truth."

Page 468, note 1. In a letter to Mr. Emerson from Staten Island, Thoreau, probably thinking that the weeds would cheer up in his friend's garden now that he was gone, wrote, "I like to think of your living on the banks of the Mill brook, in the midst of the garden with all its weeds; for what are botanical distinctions at this distance?"

Page 469, note 1. How Thoreau rejoiced in his lot, as he found it, appears in his journal for 1856: "God could not be unkind to me if he should try. I have never got over my surprise that I should have been born into the most estimable place in all the world, and in the very nick of time too."

Page 470, note 1. This passage brings up the lines in "May-Day" beginning —

> Ah! well I mind the calendar,
> Faithful through a thousand years,
> Of the painted race of flowers.

The quotation in the following sentence is from a verse in George Herbert's poem "Vertue," beginning —

> "Sweet rose, whose hue, angrie and brave,
> Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye."

Mr. Emerson had such delight in his occasional walks with Thoreau as guide to the *penetralia* of Concord woods, and had such respect for his mind, that he wished that he and his literary and cosmopolitan friends in Boston should know one another, but Thoreau could not be lured to the city. In a lecture on Clubs this wish found voice: —

"Here is a man who has seen Balaclava, the clubs of Paris, was presented at St. James's, has seen the wreckers at Florida, knows the wrath of Kansas and Montana. And here, on the other side, is my friend who knows nothing and nobody out of his parish. He is the pride of his maiden aunt, and knows muskrats and willows; never went to New York but once in his life. But if the other was a cosmorama, and had seen more than his share, my friend's eyes are microscopes, have seen down into that infinite world which stretches away into the invisible; and he had the advantage that the spot of ground on which he stood was sweeter to him than the whole world beside. Now we cannot spare either, but must have both."

Page 473, note 1. A field will yield several crops at once and divide them among owners and trespassers. Emerson, in his "Apology," tells of the crop which he took off his neighbor's field without his missing it, and Thoreau strolling over a Staten Islander's field said, "I took my toll out of the soil in the way of arrow-heads, which may, after all, be the surest crop."

Page 474, note 1. The charity with which Thoreau regarded

the railroad and the telegraph when they invaded his shrines in the woods is remarkable. More than that, one of his most remarkable poems, though in prose, is the passage about the telegraph and its wild harping, given by Mr. Channing in his *Thoreau the Poet-Naturalist*.[1]

Page 475, note 1. This reference to Thoreau is from Mr. Emerson's journal, about 1850: —

"Nothing so marks a man as bold imaginative expressions. A complete statement in the imaginative form of an important truth arrests attention, and is repeated and remembered. A phrase or two of that kind will make the reputation of a man. Pythagoras's golden sayings were such, and Socrates's and Mirabeau's and Bonaparte's; and I shall not make a sudden descent if I say that Henry Thoreau promised to make as good sentences in that kind as any American."

Mr. Charles J. Woodbury tells, in his *Talks with Emerson*, of this word which he had from him upon style. After speaking of some of the American historians, he said, "Their style slays. Neither of them lifts himself off his feet. They have no lift in them. You noticed the marble we have just seen? You remember that marble is nothing but *crystallized* limestone? Well, some writers never get out of the limestone condition. Be airy. . . . Walk upon the ground, but not to sink. It is a fine power, this. Some men have it, prominently the French. How it manifests itself in Montaigne . . . and in Urquhart's Rabelais! Grimm almost alone of the Germans has it; Borrow had it; Thoreau had it."

Page 477, note 1. The lines quoted here are all from the poem "Inspiration."

[1] Pages 188, 189. Published by Roberts Brothers, Boston, 1893.

In the extracts from Thoreau's diary, in the volume *Winter*, are many passages on the "Telegraph Harp," but none so fine as the one referred to.

Journal, 1839. "August 1. Last night came to me a beautiful poem from Henry Thoreau, 'Sympathy,' — the purest strain and the loftiest, I think, that has yet pealed from this unpoetic American forest. I hear his verses with as much triumph as I point to my Guido when they praise half poets and half painters."

Page 479, note 1. In his journal Thoreau wrote: —

"It steads us to be as true to children and boors as God himself. It is the only attitude which will suit all occasions; it only will make the earth yield her increase, and by it do we effectually expostulate with the wind." He speaks of "the charm of Nature's demeanor toward us, — strict conscientiousness and disregard of us when we have ceased to regard ourselves. So she can never offend us. How true she is, and never swerves."

The "terrible Thoreau" appears in his essay called "Life without Principle," in the collection entitled *Miscellanies*.

Page 480, note 1. It seems to the editor that this was but the expression of a mood. Thoreau's skill, exactness and remarkable powers, all backed by character, made his friend long to watch him with pride achieve something in those fields for which he recognized his own unfitness. This passage was written before Thoreau's death. His life had not yet the benefit of perspective, nor had his influence on thought and life and taste of multitudes here and abroad appeared. As has been already said, and this sketch shows, the friends could not always thrive in conversation, and Mr. Emerson had not then had opportunity to read much in the journals. Later he read in them with increasing delight and surprise, and approached his friend through them as never before. He would not then have written, as he did in his journal of 1848: —

"Henry Thoreau is like the wood-god who solicits the

wandering poet and draws him into 'antres vast and desarts idle,' and bereaves him of his memory, and leaves him naked, plaiting vines and with twigs in his hand. Very seductive are the first steps from the town to the woods, but the end is want and madness."

But the dose of Nature that sufficed for Emerson was not enough for Thoreau.

Page 482, note 1. Readers of Thoreau will not forget the passage in which he tells of his visits in the Walden cabin in the long winter evenings, from "the original proprietor who is reported to have dug Walden Pond," and his neighbor there, the "elderly dame, invisible to most persons, in whose odorous herb-garden I love to stroll."

Page 485, note 1. I find this undated sentence among notes relative to Thoreau and so marked: —

"The man of men, the only man you have seen (if you have seen one) is he who is immovably centred."

This scrap also from the journal of 1852: —

"Henry T. rightly said the other evening, talking of lightning-rods, that the only rod of safety was in the vertebræ of his own spine."

CARLYLE

Shortly after the death of Carlyle, the Massachusetts Historical Society invited Mr. Emerson to speak of his friend at their meeting, held in February, 1881. He was no longer able to write an address, but, unwilling to be silent at the meeting held in the great writer's honor, or to disappoint expectation entirely, read this short paper. Most of it is taken from a letter written by him soon after his visit to Carlyle, in 1848,

and to this a few passages from the journals were added. Hence this account of Carlyle has the characteristics of a letter written to near friends who well knew the honor and affection in which the writer held its subject. Secure in this knowledge, he could show them the man at close range — even his less lovely traits. Emerson's tastes and methods were foreign to Carlyle, and above all his good hope; yet Carlyle could not but love and praise him, and never forgot the help that Emerson's grateful recognition in person of his early work, before its acceptance at home, had been to him. In these particulars there is a striking similarity to Carlyle's relations with his other friend, John Sterling. Emerson knew the brave purpose and utter loyalty to truth of Carlyle, and delighted in his gigantic power of expression. Knowing and loving his virtues, he persistently ignored his prejudices and faults.

These men, born with the ocean between them, had each in early manhood done the other great service. Each saw that the other's metal rang true, though of different temper. One worshipped earnest strength, the other beauty in its largest sense. One worked with the heat of the blast-furnace, the other with sun-heat. With temperaments so different, it was well that the sea remained between them, but their friendship endured as long as life.

This paper was printed by the Historical Society among their *Proceedings;* also in *Scribner's Magazine* for May, 1881. In connection with it, the passages relating to Carlyle, in *English Traits*, chapters I. and XIV., may be referred to, and the review of *Past and Present*, among the papers from the *Dial*, printed in the volume *Natural History of Intellect;* also the *Correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson*, and the frequent mention of Carlyle in the *Correspondence of Emerson and Sterling*.

Page 490, note 1. In a letter written to Carlyle in 1837, hence long before Webster's defection from the cause of Freedom, Mr. Emerson, with prophetic humor, called him "a good man, and as strong as if he were a sinner." Carlyle recognized in him "a sufficient, effectual man, whom one must wish well to and prophesy well of," and saw in his face "that 'indignation' which, if it do not make 'verses,' makes *useful* way in the world." The next year Carlyle was struck with his imposing appearance, of which he gave a wonderful description,[1] and said, "As a Logic-fencer, Advocate, or Parliamentary Hercules, one would incline to back him at first sight against all the extant world."

Page 491, note 1. In a letter from London in March, 1848, when the French Revolution and the Chartist demonstrations at home alarmed the English, Mr. Emerson, telling of the conversation at a dinner-party at Mr. Baring's, said, "Carlyle declaimed a little in the style of that raven prophet who cried 'Woe to Jerusalem' just before its fall. . . . All his methods included a good deal of killing."

In a letter written to a friend, on his voyage home, Mr. Emerson tells how, when challenged by Carlyle and Arthur Helps as to men "who had the American idea," he assured them "There were such monsters hard-by the setting sun, who believed in a future such as was never a past. . . . I sketched the Boston fanaticism of right and might without bayonets or bishops, every man his own king, and all cooperation necessary and extemporaneous. Of course my men went wild at the denying to society the beautiful right to kill and imprison. But we stood fast for milk and acorns, told them that musket-worship was perfectly well known to us, that it was an old bankrupt, but that we had never seen a man of sufficient valor

[1] *Correspondence*, vol. i., p. 260.

and substance quite to carry out the other, which was nevertheless as sure as Copernican astronomy," etc.[1]

Page 492, note 1. Immediately after Mr. Emerson's return in 1848 from England, where was great suffering among the poor, he and his wife tried to introduce the use of Indian meal into England through Carlyle and his philanthropic friends. They sent out first meal, and then corn on the ear, with directions as to the various ways it might be cooked, which recipes were in some sort tried by Mrs. Carlyle and Lady Ashburton, but British conservatism could not be overcome. Carlyle tried to take an interest and make civil speeches, but, in the end, human nature burst out, "The Johnny-cake is good, the twopence-worth of currants in it too are good; but if you offer it as a bit of baked ambrosia, Ach Gott!"

Page 494, note 1. John Sterling, in a letter to Emerson, in 1844, said: "Carlyle, our far greater Tacitus, in truth hates all poetry except for that element in it which is not poetic at all, and aims at giving a poetic completeness to historic fact. He is the greatest of moralists and politicians, a gigantic anti-poet."

Page 495, note 1. Mr. Emerson, however, shows another view of Carlyle's attitude in the journal of 1834: "Goethe and Carlyle and perhaps Novalis have an undisguised dislike or contempt for common virtue standing on common principles. Meantime they are dear lovers, steadfast maintainers of the pure ideal morality. But they worship it as the highest beauty; their love is artistic. Praise Socrates to them, or Fénelon, much more any inferior contemporary good man, and they freeze at once into silence. It is to them sheer prose."

Page 497, note 1. In spite of Carlyle's strictures on

[1] *Letters from Ralph Waldo Emerson to a Friend.* Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1899.

poetry, Mr. Emerson, when he read *Sartor Resartus*, felt that there was a poetic element in him, and wrote in his journal in 1833: "As to Carlyle, he is an exemplification of Novalis's maxim concerning the union of Poetry and Philosophy. He has married them, and both are the gainers. Who has done so before as truly and as well? *Sartor Resartus* is a philosophical poem."

Page 498, note 1. In the essay on "Aristocracy," in this volume (page 63), is a passage on the test that times of riot or revolution put on the scholar's manhood, and Mr. Emerson took pride in his friend's steadfast courage on behalf of the common weal.

Throughout the journals are expressions of the comfort he took in his brother across the sea, and the pleasure and pride with which he read each new work sent by him. Many of these will appear in the volumes made up of passages selected from the journals, which the editor hopes ere long to prepare.

GEORGE L. STEARNS

Mr. Stearns was born in Medford and made his home there throughout his life. He early went into business in Boston and was associated in the business of ship-chandlery with Albert Fearing. Later he was engaged in the manufacture of sheet and pipe lead. His great energy, clear head and integrity made him respected and highly successful in whatever business he undertook. He was an excellent citizen. A "Conscience Whig" in 1846, he of course became a "Freesoiler" in 1848, and thereafter in the midst of his busy life gave time and thought and money lavishly to the

anti-slavery cause, and especially to aid Kansas in her struggle. At that time he became acquainted with John Brown. Not only did Mr. Stearns, in his capacity as an officer of the Kansas Aid Society, furnish him with rifles, ammunition and supplies, but he personally contributed Colt's revolvers to the value of thirteen hundred dollars. He did not know of Brown's design to make the Harper's Ferry raid, but as an officer of the Kansas Aid Society, fearing that Brown might make some aggressive move into a slave state, wrote to remind him that he held his rifles in trust, only to be used in Kansas. While John Brown was undergoing his trial, Mrs. Stearns sent Brackett, the sculptor, to take the measurements and make the necessary sketches for a bust of the old warrior in the prison at Charlestown, Virginia. The bust still adorns the Stearns house in Medford.

During the War of the Rebellion Mr. Stearns was a tireless and effective worker on the side of freedom, but, like his friend John M. Forbes, kept his name out of the papers. Yet he was the founder of the *Commonwealth* and *The Right Way* newspapers, and active in the Loyal Publication Society. He had urged the arming of negroes at a time when it was exceedingly difficult to recruit more white troops. When it was decided to raise colored regiments, Governor Andrew made Mr. Stearns chairman of a committee to do so. He assumed the most difficult and delicate part of the work, the recruiting negroes from Canada, and in the Southwest. In this he was wonderfully successful, and public opinion, at first hostile, rapidly changed. This committee raised the 54th and 55th Massachusetts Regiments of infantry, and the 5th Massachusetts cavalry. Secretary Stanton commissioned Mr. Stearns a major, and he recruited for the regiments of United States colored troops.

Major Stearns died in middle life in April, 1867. In a notice of his life in the *Commonwealth* it was truly said of him: "Major Stearns saw the working out and full consummation of the great principles to which his life was devoted; freedom everywhere, the slave free, and a citizen, and a soldier, and a voter — all this he saw before he passed on."

Page 504, note 1. In the Senate Document of the 36th Congress, No. 278, is the report of this committee. At the end of his long examination, fearlessly met, a senator asked Mr. Stearns, "Do you disapprove of such an action as that at Harper's Ferry?" He answered: "I should have disapproved it if I had known of it in advance. Since then I have changed my opinion. I believe John Brown to be the Representative Man of this century, as Washington of the last. The Harper's Ferry affair, and the capacity shown by the Italians for self-government, are the great events of the age; one will free Europe and the other America."

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